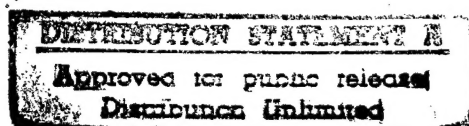




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Soviet Union

Military History Journal

No 10, October 1988

19980126 191

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Soviet Union

MILITARY HISTORY JOURNAL

No. 10, October 1988

JPRS-UMJ-89-004

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29 March 1989

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MILITARY HISTORY JOURNAL

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They Stood to the Death

00010003a Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY
ZHURNAL in Russian No 10, Oct 88 (signed to press
23 Sep 88) pp 3-13

[Article, published under the heading "Security Classification Lifted," by Col Gen L.M. Sandalov: "They Stood to the Death"]

[Text] [Editorial Introduction] Leonid Mikhaylovich Sandalov was born on 28 March 1900 in the town of Vichuga in Ivanovo Oblast. After completing the factor-plant school, he worked at a textile mill like his parents. Here, in the worker environment, his ideology was shaped. In 1918, he became one of the organizers and leaders of the local Komsomol cell. In the spring of 1919, he was enrolled in the Ivanovo-Voznesensk leadership courses.

In the flames of battle on the Turkestan and then the Southern Fronts, L.M. Sandalov learned the art of fighting. The war tempered his will and instilled an affection for the military profession. After the war he commanded a company in the Kiev Military District. In 1924, he joined the party. In 1926, he completed the Kiev Unified Commanders School imeni S.S. Kamanev, and then studied in the Academy imeni M.V. Frunze, and after completing this he served in staff positions in the Kiev Military District. Soon thereafter L.M. Sandalov who had demonstrated good operational abilities was sent to study in the then just-opened General Staff Academy. In the autumn of 1937, he was appointed the chief of the operations section of the Belorussian Military District and in August 1940, the chief of staff of the 4th Army.

In July 1941, L.M. Sandalov was appointed the chief of staff of the Central Front and later the Bryansk, Second Baltic and Fourth Ukrainian Fronts.

After the end of the Great Patriotic War, Col Gen Sandalov was chief of staff in the Carpathian Military District, the deputy chief of the Main Staff of the Ground Troops and chief of staff of the Moscow Military District.

In 1951, a terrible hardship befell Leonid Mikhaylovich as in carrying out his official duties he was involved in an air disaster as a result of which he was deprived of the ability to walk. But the totally dedicated communist, the intrepid and courageous soldier, the talented staff worker Sandalov began a literary career. Six books by him have appeared.

In the next several issues of the journal the readers will be provided in an abridged version with chapters from his book and from which the security classification has been lifted.*

In it L.M. Sandalov has not set the task for himself of generalizing all available experience from the initial period of the war. From the example of the 4th Army, the author describes the actions of the leadership of the Western Special Military District on the eve of the war, he shows the particular features of the combat actions of our troops and the influence of their peacetime combat readiness on the course of operations in the initial period of the war and also brings out the reasons for the severe defeat for the formations of the 4th Army. The book gives examples of the steadfastness and stubbornness of the units and formations, the heroism of the soldiers and officers in fighting against superior enemy forces under the difficult combat conditions. [End of Editorial Introduction]

The Situation on the Western Sector by the Summer of 1941

The change in the frontiers of our state was one of the most important factors which, along with other factors, defined the conditions under which the events in the initial period of the war started.

The troops of the Western Special Military District [ZapOVO] had to cover against possible German invasion the most important Warsaw-Minsk strategic sector leading to the central industrial zone of the nation and its capital, Moscow.

In the event of an attack by the enemy, the troops in the areas directly adjacent to the state frontier were, by a defensive in the positions of the fortified areas and field fortifications along the state frontier, to prevent an enemy invasion into the district's territory and thereby cover the mobilization, concentration and deployment of the main district forces.

The difficulty in the executing of this task by the district troops under the existing conditions was determined primarily by the fact that the territory of Western Belorussia, like the other new regions of the country in the west, was virtually unprepared in military engineering terms: there was a poorly developed airfield network; it was essential to convert the railroad from the narrow Western European gauge to the broad gauge and increase their capacity which was significantly below the capacity of the railroads running from the interior regions of the nation to the old state frontier. The new areas also did not permit the normal quartering of the troops and the organization of their combat training. Barracks were limited, there were not enough ranges, and the organizing of a vehicle maintenance service required great expenditures of materiel and time.

Consequently, for carrying out the tasks set for the border ZapOVO it was essential first to carry out an enormous amount of important work in preparing the theater of operations, in creating conditions for combat training and ensuring the combat readiness of the troops.

The defenses in the new border zone were organized on the principle of employing as a backbone the units of the fortified areas with their reinforcing with field troops, that is, the first echelon rifle divisions of the cover armies which could occupy the positions created by them. Consequently, the defense of the state frontier was to be provided by the units from the fortified areas and by rifle divisions relying on the fortified areas and the positions of the field fortifications.

In the autumn of 1939, the districts and the General Staff worked out versions for organizing the fortified areas in the border zone. The command of the ZapOVO proposed two versions: the first was to erect a line of fortified areas along the state frontier; the second was to erect fortifications along the line: the right bank of the Neman River to Grodno, then along the Bobr River to its mouth with the incorporating in the system of fortified areas the former fortress of Osovets and the fortifications of Gonendz, the Narev River to Lapy, Belsk, Cheremkha, Zhabinka, Khvedkovichi.

In the event of adopting the second version, the line of fortified areas would run 25-50 km away from the state frontier. This provided a number of advantages for our troops. In the first place, conditions would be established for building fortified areas outside the field of vision of the enemy; secondly, the strip of terrain between the state frontier and the line of fortified areas, in being reinforced by a number of defensive structures, would be a powerful forward defense area capable of holding up the enemy and gaining time for the troops of the cover armies to take up the main defensive lines. This, in turn, would contribute to the successful execution of the cover tasks by the troops.

Initially the second version with certain adjustments was supported by the chief of the Red Army General Staff, MSU B.M. Shaposhnikov. However, the version of building fortified areas along the line of the state frontier was approved.

It might be assumed that in taking such a decision, they considered the limited capabilities of our troops which did not permit the simultaneous execution of major defensive work to a great depth. However, these were not the main considerations. The doctrine of "not one inch of our land is to be surrendered to anyone" which prevailed at that time and was understood by the superior military leadership in a literal sense had the decisive influence on the decision taken to build fortifications along the new state frontier.

Conditions for Preparing the Theater of Operations

After the liberation of Western Belorussia in September 1939, the left-flank 4th Army moved up with its main forces to the Brest area. With the start of the Soviet-Finnish War, the following were withdrawn for the Finnish Front: the headquarters of the XXIII Rifle Corps, the 29th Tank Brigade, the 8th and 4th Rifle

Divisions. By the end of 1939, remaining in the 4th Army were the 6th, 55th and 33d Rifle Divisions and the 32d Tank Brigade. Just two rifle divisions were located directly in the border area. Here both of them were stationed in Brest. One rifle division and one tank brigade was stationed in the area of Bereza-Kartuzskaya, Pruzhany, comprising the army second echelon.

It must be said that the disposition of Soviet troops in Western Belorussia was initially not subordinate to operational considerations but rather was determined by the presence of barracks and quarters suitable for quartering the troops. This, in particular, explained the clustered positioning of one-half of the 4th Army troops with all their emergency supply dumps on the very frontier in Brest and in the former Brest Fortress. Even the district military hospital was located in the quarters of the fortress.

After the fighting on the Karelian Isthmus, the military leadership became convinced that in initial combat operations the fortified areas would play a major if not the determining role. For this reason, for accelerating their construction during the winter of 1939-1940, reconnaissance work as conducted to determine the location for building permanent defensive structures. This work in the Brest Fortified Area which was planned for construction was carried out under a thick snow cover and hurriedly. For this reason, the results of the winter reconnaissance were unsatisfactory and in the spring of 1940 all the work had to be redone.

Thus, in the winter of 1939-1940 no work was done to build the fortified areas and defensive positions. The army troops were chiefly concerned with organizing quarters for the personnel and creating conditions for combat training, that is, they were building stables, dumps, airfields, artillery ranges, firing ranges, tank driving ranges, camps and so forth.

The second reconnaissance in the aim of determining the locations of the permanent firing emplacements in the Brest Fortified Area was conducted by the 4th Army commander, Lt Gen V.I. Chuykov, who had returned to the army after the end of the Soviet-Finnish War, together with the commandant of the fortified area. Then the army commander established the line for building the battalion areas for the divisions. The construction of the defensive works in the Brest Fortified Area got underway at the beginning of the summer of 1940. By this time the 33d Rifle Division had left the 4th Army for the Baltic Special Military District and the army was left with only two rifle divisions and one tank brigade.

The mechanical transfer of Finnish experience in building the fortified areas under our conditions, without determining their role in the initial operations and

without considering the particular features of the theater of operations, the season, the differences in the organization and armament of the Finnish and German Armies was wrong.

Naturally, in preparing to repulse a strong, technically well-armed enemy with large mechanized forces and a strong aviation which the German Ground Troops and Air Forces were, it was impossible to use as a basis only the experience of the Soviet-Finnish War in the extensive Western and Southwestern theaters of operations.

By the autumn of 1940, after the incorporation of the Baltic republics as part of the USSR and the manning of the Baltic Special Military District formed on their territory, the 29th Tank Brigade was returned to the 4th Army of the ZapOVO. By the beginning of August, the headquarters of the XXVIII Rifle Corps had arrived in the place of the XXIII, and the 49th Rifle Division was in the area of Vyskokoye, Cheremkha in the place of the 8th. Soon thereafter, the 42d Rifle Division arrived in Bereza-Kartuzskaya to replace the 33d.

For building the Brest Fortified Area in the spring of 1940, the 74th Headquarters of the Chief of Construction (UNS) was shifted from the Slutsk Fortified Area and construction on this was halted. The spring and the start of the summer were spent on moving the UNS, on seeking local building materials and organizing housing for the construction workers. Construction of the Brest Fortified Area commenced only in the summer. There was an analogous picture in the remaining armies of the ZapOVO.

At the end of the summer of 1940, after the end of military operations in France and the elimination of the Western Front for Germany, the threat of attack on the USSR grew. From this time the front of defensive works on the western frontiers was broadened. The rifle divisions from the first echelons of the cover armies continued engineer work to provide field fortifications for the fortified areas. All the combat engineer units from the 4th Army and the 33d Engineer Regiment from the district were involved in building the Brest Fortified Area. The building materials, aside from the local ones, were hauled in from the Slutsk and the former Polish Baranovich Fortified Areas.

The construction of permanent structures and the work on the field fortification of the fortified areas in many sectors were carried out directly along the frontier in sight of the German frontier outposts. The concrete points and emplacements of the first position could be viewed from the German observation posts. The reciprocal positioning of the fortified areas and the troop positions did not ensure, in the event of an enemy surprise attack, the prompt occupying of the fortifications not only by the field troops but also by the special fortified areas units. For example, in the zone of the 4th Army, the time for occupying the Brest Fortified Area

was set by the district at 30 hours for one rifle division, 9 hours for another, and 0.5-1.5 hour for the fortified area units. In training alerts it was ascertained that these times were understated.

Particularly intense construction of fortified areas got underway in the spring of 1941. For building the Brest Fortified Area, in addition to the 33d Engineer Regiment, the combat engineer battalions from the rifle corps and rifle divisions, in March-April 10,000 local inhabitants were recruited along with 4,000 carts. The local population worked under contract and was used in ditch digging as well as for transporting building materials.

The Brest Fortified Area included the Semyatichskiy Sector of the Zambrovskiy Fortified Area and its length reached 100 km. As the commandant headquarters, the 62d Headquarters arrived from the Mozyr Fortified Area headed by Maj Gen M.I. Puzyrev.

In the aim of supporting the boundary with the Kiev Special Military District and organizing the defenses in the zone between the Brest Fortified Area and Wlodawa, the Command of the ZapOVO moved up from Mozyr the 75th Rifle Division the staff of which was quartered in the area of Malorita. The division was incorporated in the 4th Army.

The airfield network in Western Belorussia was very little developed. The existing airfields were of poor quality, without concrete landing strips, they were small-sized and not suited for the landing and take-off of new, more advanced aircraft. For this reason, at the beginning of 1941, the Soviet government adopted a decision to build new airfields with concrete landing strips with dimensions of 1,200 x 80 m. In the Brest sector they planned to build 15 airfields and in the Belostok, 12.

Airfield construction commenced in May 1941. On 1 June, only 50 percent of the plan approved by the people's commissar of defense for 1941 airfield construction had been completed. Working at each airfield were 2,000-4,000 persons. Naturally, by the start of the war, none of the newly built airfields had been completed.

A decision was taken by the Soviet government on measures to increase the capacity of railroads in Western Belorussia in September 1940. On the Brest sector they planned to build new railroad lines on the sectors of Timkovichi, Baranovich and Oranchitsy, Belovezha to lay double tracking on the sectors of Slutsk, Baranovich, Belostok and Pinsk, Zhabinka, and convert all lines from the Western European gauge (1,435 mm) to our gauge (1,524 mm). All the work was to be carried out in 1941 and 1942 with the main amount of work coming in 1942.

By the start of the war, none of the projects had been completed and a majority had not even started to be built.

Highways and dirt roads in the southern part of Western Belorussia, with the exception of the Warsaw Highway, were little adapted for motor traffic. It was also not possible to carry out extensive work to enlarge and improve the road network in a short period of time. All of this had a negative impact during the first days of the war on the maneuverability of our troops and the carrying out of transport and evacuation.

The network of permanent wire communications in the theater of operations was little developed. Telegraph and telephone equipment was obsolete. Available to the 4th Army for permanent use was the line Minsk, Kobrin, Brest and Pinsk, Kobrin. For contact with certain garrisons (Purzhany, Bereza-Kartuzskaya, Malorita) the army staff leased a wire of the telegraph-telephone of the People's Commissariat of Communications for 1 or 2 hours a day. Long distance telephone communication was provided only via the municipal and village telephone exchanges.

In 1941, there were plans to build permanent communications lines to the airfields which were extant as well as under construction and to the positions of the air defense units. But this work had not been commenced before the war. The plans to build underground communications lines to the telephone and telegraph exchanges and communications centers had also not been carried out.

Thus, the theater of operations in which the troops of the Western Front, including the 4th Army, had to fight were unprepared by the start of the war.

Tasks of the 4th Army Troops According to the Plan for Covering the State Frontier

In April 1941, the 4th Army Command received from the staff of the ZapOVO a directive according to which a plan was to be worked out for covering the mobilization, concentration and deployment of the troops on the Brest sector. This pointed out that "in the aim of covering mobilization, concentration and deployment of the troops, all the district territory is to be divided into army frontier cover areas (RP)

"1. The general tasks for the district troops in defending the state frontier are:

"a) By a stubborn defense of the field fortifications along the state frontier and the fortified areas:

"—Not to permit the invasion of either a ground or air enemy into the district territory;

"—To firmly cover the mobilization, concentration and deployment of the district troops;

"b) By air defense and air operations to ensure normal operation of the railroads and the concentration of the troops;

"c) By all types and means of reconnaissance to promptly determine the nature of the concentration and grouping of enemy troops;

"d) By active air operations to win air supremacy;

"e) Not to allow the dropping and landing of airborne assault forces and enemy sabotage groups.

"The defense of the state frontier is to be organized on the following grounds:

"a) As the basis of the defenses, to establish a strong defense of the fortified areas and the field fortifications set up along the line of the state frontier using all forces and means....

"b) Particular attention is to be given to antitank defenses. In the event of the breakthrough of large motorized and mechanized formations, the combating and destruction of them will be carried out directly by the district command and for this a portion of the antitank artillery brigades, the aviation and mechanized corps is to remain at the disposal of the district commander.

"In this instance the task of the armies will be to cover a breakthrough on the front and prevent the incursion of enemy motorized infantry and field troops.

"The tasks of the antitank artillery brigades will come down to meeting the enemy tanks on the prepared lines and by heavy artillery fire together with aviation, check their advance until the moving up and counterstrikes of our mechanized corps.

"The task of the mechanized corps will be, deploying under the cover of the antitank artillery brigades and antitank weapons of the units, by strong flanking and concentric attacks together with the aviation, to deal a final defeat to the enemy mechanized formations and eliminate the breakthrough."

For carrying out the set tasks of defending the state frontier, the cover troops (the first echelon armies of the district) were allocated by cover areas. In practical terms this meant that each of these armies organized its own cover area.

For the 4th Army, the sector of Brest, Baranovichi was the crucial sector. Proceeding from this, it was given an area with the demarcation lines: to the right (orig.) Drokhichin, (orig.) Gaynovka, Kossovo; to the left (orig.) Deblin, Wlodawa, Nevezh and thence along the Pripyat River.

Because of the change in the righthand demarcation line, the district transferred the southern sector of the Zambroskiy Fortified Area to the 74th UNS for construction and included this in the Brest Fortified Area.

In the district's directive, the following make-up was defined for the army area:

"Cover Area No. 4 (Brest)

- "Headquarters of 4th Army;
- "Headquarters of XXVIII Rifle Corps with corps units;
- "42d, 6th, 75th and 100th Rifle Divisions;
- "Headquarters of XIV Mechanized Corps with corps units;
- "22d and 30th Tank and 205th Motorized Divisions;
- "120th and 138th Howitzer Artillery Regiments of the RGK [High Command Reserve];
- "62d Brest Fortified Area;
- "10th Mixed Air Division;
- "89th Border Detachment;
- "Chief of the cover area—commander of the 4th Army."

For the army command initially it was unclear why the army cover area did not include the 49th Rifle Division while at the same time the army zone was broadened at the expense of the Semyatichskiy Sector of the Zambroskiy Fortified Area. In a clarification at the district staff it turned out that according to the district cover plan later on the boundary of the 4th and 10th Armies, they planned to organize Cover Area No. 3 using troops from the 13th Army and this was to include the 49th Rifle Division from the 4th Army and the 113th Rifle Division of the 10th Army. For now this future area had been temporarily included in the zones of the 4th and 10th Armies. The 49th and 113th Rifle Divisions until the arrival of the headquarters of the 13th Army were to be employed on defensive works on the left flank of the 10th Army while the 42d Rifle Division which was part of Cover Area No. 4 was on the right flank of the 4th Army. Thus, these divisions were to work on the territory of the future Cover Area No. 3.

On the question of the concentration of the troops in Cover Area No. 4 upon combat alert the district directive contained the following instructions:

"The troops of the area positioned on the state frontier in direct proximity to it, with the announcing of a combat alert are immediately to take up the defensive set out in the plan (6th and 75th Rifle Divisions).

The remaining troops are to be concentrated:

	Position	Concentration Area
Headquarters of 4th Army	Kobrin	Kobrin
Headquarters of XXVIII Rifle Corps	Brest	Zhabinka
42d Rifle Division	Brest	Slavy, Vysokoye
100th Rifle Division	Uruchye	Cheremkha
Headquarters of XIV Mechanized Corps	Kobrin	Tevli

The remaining troops are to be concentrated:

	Position	Concentration Area
22d Tank Division	Brest	Grabovtsy, Zhabinka
30th Tank Division	Pruzhany	Shcherbovo, Boyary
205th Motorized Division	Bereza-Kartuzskaya	Poddubno
120th Howitzer Regiment	Kossovo	Rachki
318th Howitzer Regiment	Myshenki	Zauzhovne

"Note: The 42d Rifle Division upon special instructions can move directly into the planned defensive zone in bypassing the concentration area.

"The times for the alerting and occupying of the defensive positions are set as follows:

- "a) 42d Rifle Division—30 hours;
- "b) 6th Rifle Division—3-9 hours;
- "c) 75th Rifle Division—4-10 hours.

"The 100th Rifle Division is to be transported by motor transport and railroad and be concentrated in the area of Cheremkha at 'M-3'."

Further, the district directive stated:

"In the event of a breakthrough by large, mechanized formations from the area of Biala-Podlaska to Brest, Baranovichi, the XLVII Rifle Corps in cooperation with the 10th Combined Air Division is to strongly hold the line of Pruzhany, Gorodets and not allow the spread of the enemy to the east of this line.

"The XIV Mechanized Corps is to be concentrated in the antitank area and from behind the alternate position of Kamenets, Shcherchevo, Dzyaduvka, is to attack the enemy in the flank and rear on the general axis of Zhabinka and together with units from the XLVII Rifle Corps' is to destroy the enemy which has broken through."

At the end of the district staff's directive (Points 5-7), general instructions were issued to the troops on building the rear defensive positions, on logistic support and the procedure for putting the cover plan into action. These came down to the following:

"5. In addition to building the first and second lines of the fortified area, the zones of the forward defensive area and the field fortifications of the fortified area which are being built at present, with the beginning of a combat alert, preparations and equipping are to be started on the rear defensive positions, army and front. The reconnoitering of these lines and the compiling of the work plans for them will be carried out during a field trip in July 1941.

"6. Logistic support for the troops. Before the 15th day of army mobilization, the following are to be issued: 3 units of fire of ammunition, 3 loads of fuel for combat vehicles, 5 loads for transport vehicles and 15 daily rations of food and fodder.

"The requirement is to be covered as follows: 1 unit of fire in the troops for ammunition, 2 units of fire in the district dumps; 2 loads of fuel in the troops and 3 loads in the district dumps; food and fodder are to be met by the current and emergency troop supplies.

"7. General instructions: the cover plan is to be put into effect upon receipt of a coded telegram over the signature of the commander, the military council member and the chief of staff of the district with the conditional contents: 'open "red packet" and begin actions according to the plan'."

From the district plan it can be seen that the 4th Army was given the task of organizing defense in one of the four district cover areas. From the number of forces assigned for this purpose (1 rifle corps headquarters, 1 mechanized corps headquarters, 4 field, 2 tank and 1 motorized divisions and 2 artillery regiments of the RGK) it can be judged that the Brest-Baranovichi sector, even if not being considered less important than, for instance, the Belostok, was viewed equally with the other operational sectors. In any event it was not assumed that the enemy's main thrust was possible in the zone of the 4th Army.

In accord with the directive received from the district, an army cover plan was worked out. The decision to organize the defenses in the cover area of the 4th Army was as follows:

"1. In the border zone between the new delimiting lines over a length of 150 km, the defenses are to be organized on a broad front: the XXVIII Rifle Corps consisting of the 42d and 6th Rifle Divisions in the positions being prepared in the Brest Fortified Area; the 75th Rifle Division subordinate directly to the army in the field positions being prepared to the south of the Brest Fortified Area. The basic sectors for the defensive: for the XXVIII Rifle Corps, Brest, Kobrin, Bereza-Kartuzskaya and for the 75th Rifle Division, Malorita, Pinsk.

"2. In the event of a threatening situation, the troops are to act in the following manner:

"The 42d Rifle Division is to move from Brest and in part from Zhabinka to the right flank of the army to the sector from Drokhichin to the mouth of the Pulva River. The main axis for the defense of the division is Vysokoye, Pruzhany.

"The 6th Rifle Division is to take up the defensive in the center of the army zone from the mouth of the Pulva River to Priluki. The unit is to be ready in 6-9 hours. The division is to be supported by the 447th Corps Artillery Regiment.

"The headquarters of the XXVIII Rifle Corps with a single rifle regiment (minus a battalion) from the 6th Rifle Division (corps reserve) is to move to Zhabinka.

"The 455th Corps Artillery Regiment is to arrive from Pinsk and is to be given a task depending upon the situation.

"The army second echelon—the XIV Mechanized Corps—is to concentrate, as was indicated in the district directive, with the tank divisions toward the line of Kamenets, Zhabinka and with the 205th Motorized Division in Poddubno; the corps staff is to be in Tevli. The corps is to prepare routes for reaching the concentration area and counterstrikes on the axes: a) Vysokoye, Drokhichin; b) Pilishchi, Brest; c) Kamenets, Zhabinka.

"The 100th Rifle Division is to arrive at 'M-3' by rail from the Minsk area to the Cheremkha area and is to enter the army reserve. The two howitzer artillery regiments of the RGK which are to be included in the cover area are to be concentrated at the points indicated in the district directive.

"The 10th Combined Air Division is to prepare cooperation with the XXVIII Rifle and XIV Mechanized Corps. The main areas of air operations: a) Brest, Kobrin; b) Nemiruv, Vidoml, Pruzhany.

"The army staff and the staff of the 10th Combined Air Division are in Kobrin."

The plan for logistic support was worked out in accord with the district directive.

Thus, in assessing the army cover plan, it should be pointed out that this corresponded to the district directive which, in essence, had already resolved all the main questions for the army: indicated were the make-up of the cover area, the concentration areas upon the combat alert, the times the troops were to be ready, the tasks for the troops and the procedure of their execution and, consequently, the shortcomings in the plan of the district command to provide the cover were automatically incorporated in the army plan.

The main shortcoming of the district and army plans was their lack of realism. A significant portion of the troops provided for carrying out cover tasks still did not exist. For example, the 13th Army which was given the task of creating the Cover Area No. 3 between the 10th and 4th Armies and the XIV Mechanized Corps which was to be part of the 4th Army were in the stage of organization. The arrival of certain formations in the new areas in the event of the outbreak of a military conflict was set for times which did not allow them to partake in carrying out the cover tasks (the 100th Rifle Division with an arrival date at "M-3").

The organization of the defensive for the 4th Army was most negatively influenced by incorporating in its zone one-half of Cover Area No. 3. In practical terms this meant that the 49th Rifle Division of the 4th Army had to carry out defensive works outside the army zone on the Belsk sector from Nur to Drokhichin and occupy this sector upon an alert while the 42d Rifle Division on the Semyatichskiy sector of the Zambrovskiy Fortified Area would do the same from Drokhichin to Nemiruv, that is, in the position of the 49th Rifle Division. Here the sector from Drokhichin to Nemiruv, after the constituting of the 13th Army would become part of Cover Area No. 3 and was assigned for occupying by the 113th Rifle Division while the 42d Division was to return for defensive work to the line from Nemiruv to the south-east. Consequently, before the transfer of the headquarters of Cover Area No. 3 to the 13th Army the troops were to conduct defensive work ready to occupy those sectors which were indicated in the district directive. This meant that in the event of the opening of military operations units of three divisions (42d, 49th and 113th) would be forced to shift upon the alert over a distance of 50-75 km. But one could scarcely count that they would be able to promptly occupy their defensive lines.

The headquarters of the 13th Army began to be constituted in May 1941 in Mogilev. The army command had instructions on the forthcoming move to Belsk, but it did not have the directive on the cover plan from the district staff. The 49th Rifle Division of the 4th Army and the 113th Rifle Division of the 10th Army, after the constituting of the headquarters of the 13th Army, were to be transferred to the II Rifle Corps the headquarters of which was located in Minsk.

This led to a situation where prior to the beginning of the war, RP-3 [Cover Area No. 3] had not yet been organized. The headquarters of the II Rifle Corps did not bring together the 49th and 113th Rifle Divisions. The XIII Mechanized Corps positioned in the area of Lapy, Belsk, Gaynovka, had not completed its constituting and was poorly supplied with materiel. The Headquarters of the 13th Army had not arrived in the Belsk area. The Zambrovskiy Fortified Area had not been built up and was without weapons. All of this had severe consequences, as on the first day of the war neither the 49th and the 113th Divisions or the XIII Mechanized Corps had received tasks from anyone, they were fighting completely without command and retreated from under the enemy attacks to the northeast, into the zone of the 10th Army.

The tasks confronting the troops of RP-4 (4th Army) was unrealistic in that the Brest Fortified Area still did not exist and the field fortifications had not yet been built; and the organizing of the defenses was unfeasible along a front of over 150 km in a short period of time using the forces of three rifle divisions a significant portion of which were building the fortified area.

The task set for the XIV Mechanized Corps was also unrealistic. The corps divisions had just received new reinforcements of rank-and-file and were below strength in tank and other weapons, tractors for artillery, the rear subunits were below strength and there was a shortage of command personnel. Arriving as reinforcements was a large number of indigenous inhabitants from the Central Asian republics who had little or no knowledge of Russian. The motor transport available in the divisions made it possible to transport simultaneously not more than 30-40 percent of their personnel. The divisions, their units and subunits as well as the staffs of all levels had poor training.

Consequently, the corps as the army second echelon, because it was below strength and untrained, could not carry out the task assigned to it of launching a counter-strike on the defensive or exploit the success on the offensive. For it a major problem was even the bringing of the divisions to the assembly area upon a combat alert as the distance of these to the positions of the tank divisions reached 40 km and for the motorized one up to 60 km.

The concentration area had been set particularly poorly for alerting the 22d Tank Division which was stationed in Brest, in a southern military camp to the south of the Mukhavets River. Upon an alert it was to move to the Zhabinka area and further north. Here the division had to cross the Mukhavets River, cut the Warsaw Highway and the two railway lines of Brest—Baranovichi and Brest—Kovel. This meant that during the movement of the division any traffic would be halted in the Brest Area along the Dnieper-Bug Canal as well as along the highways and railroads.

Consequently, it was imperative to change the division's position however the district did not give its agreement for this.

The unsuccessful positioning of the 22d Tank Division and the badly planned movement of the division into the Zhabinka area led during the first hours of the war to enormous casualties and to the destruction of a large portion of the division's equipment and supplies.

It must be pointed out that the district had considered the possibility of an enemy breakthrough of the shallow defenses of the cover armies along a broad front following the line of the incomplete fortified areas with a low troop density. The district cover plan envisaged that if large motorized enemy formations did break through the army defenses, the enemy was to be destroyed by artillery antitank brigades and mechanized corps under the district. However, on the Baranovichi sector, there were no artillery antitank brigades under the district. For this reason the district staff in the directive to the 4th Army pointed out that in the event of an enemy breakthrough of the army defenses, the XLVII Rifle Corps was to move up to the line of Pruzhany, Gorodets to check it. In this

instance the XIV Mechanized Corps was to be concentrated in the antitank area of Kamenets, Shcherchevo, Dzyaduvka and from the alternate position attack the enemy in the flank and rear on the general axis of Zhabinka. Hence, it was clear that although the district included the XIV Mechanized Corps in the RP-4 (4th Army), it continued to consider it under its subordination.

The falaciousness of such a decision was that the mechanized corps, in being part of the cover area in the absence of any other troops in the army second echelon, would inevitably be drawn into battle before it could be concentrated in the antitank area. For this reason its divisions and units would have to be committed to battle and this, considering the status of the corps and its capabilities, was virtually unfeasible. Moreover, the designated "antitank area" was a significant distance away from the main routes of the operational sector and no one had been assigned to establish an "alternate position" in it.

Also among the shortcomings of the army cover plan we would have to put the inclusion in RP-4 of the 100th Rifle Division which was to arrive in the army by rail at "M-3." Such planning for the concentration of the troops at the frontier was doomed to failure from the start. And this is what happened. The division did not arrive on the third day of the war or even later as part of the 4th Army.

A major shortcoming of the district and army cover plans was the fact that they made no provision for establishing the rear front and army defensive zones. The construction of them was to get underway with the outbreak of hostilities, while the reconnaissance of the lines and the compiling of the work plan were to be carried out during a field trip in July 1941.

Thus, on the basis of the army plan (RP-4 Plan) which had the designated shortcomings, just before the war orders were worked out for all the formations and these included the so-called "red packets" and instructions for bringing up the troops upon combat alert and having them occupy the assigned positions or concentration areas, with the outbreak of war the command of the army and the commanders of the formations and units, in attempting to carry out the army plan, encountered insurmountable difficulties caused by the shortcomings of this plan.

(to be continued)

Footnotes

* L.M. Sandalov, "Boevyye deystvia voysk 4-y armii v nachal'nyy period volikoy otechestvennoy voyny" [Combat Operations of the 4th Army in the Initial Period of the Great Patriotic War], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1961.

1. The XLVII Rifle Corps was subordinate to the district. This point in the directive was aimed at establishing a procedure for cooperation between the XLVII Rifle

Corps and the XIV Mechanized Corps as well as the 10th Air Division in the event that enemy mechanized formations broke through on the Brest-Baranovichi axis.—Author.

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Reflections on Fate of Military Leader

00010003b Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY
ZHURNAL in Russian No 10, Oct 88 (signed to press
23 Sep 88) pp 14-20

[Article, published under the heading "From Unpublished Manuscripts," by Lt Gen (Res) N.G. Pavlenko, doctor of historical sciences, professor: "Reflections on the Fate of a Military Leader; Notes of a Military Historian"]

[Text]

1. Certain Preliminary Comments

The concept of a "military leader" ["polkovodets"] is usually employed in those instances when it is a question of military superiors who skillfully lead large troop groupings in theaters of operations. At times this concept without grounds for this is employed to describe political leaders. In particular, this was done by the Nazi Gen Halder who published the book "Hitler as a Military Leader." The attempts by other authors to call certain political leaders military leaders has also not always been valid.

Among the galaxy of prominent military leaders of the Great Patriotic War a leading place is held, of course, by Georgiy Konstantinovich Zhukov. In the literature he is often called the great military leader and is put in the same rank with Suvorov and Kutuzov. This is valid. For Georgiy Konstantinovich excelled not only in the number and scale of victories won on campaign but also in a high level of generalship ability which had a great influence upon the development of military art.

However, G.K. Zhukov was not free of major shortcomings which, in my view, must not be overlooked. His career as a military leader was not strewn with roses. At first, fate showed him unbelievable stinginess, then favor, followed by great generosity and, finally, the greatest injustice. During the years of the Civil War, many of his contemporaries headed regiments and divisions while G.K. Zhukov did not rise higher than a squadron commander. In the 1920s he was in command of a regiment and a brigade and in the 1930s formations and field forces. The most complicated in the activities of the military leader was the period between the events at Khalkhin-Gol (1939) and the Berlin Operation (1945). Precisely during these 6 years, G.K. Zhukov developed as a high-class military leader. For an immeasurably

longer time, he, as they say, was "out of favor with the rulers": under I.V. Stalin this lasted 7 years (from mid-1946 until the spring of 1953). During this time he was in command of the Odessa and Urals Districts. From the autumn of 1957 until the spring of 1965, G.K. Zhukov was again in disgrace. From then until the end of his life (until 1974) there were relapses of this. During this period the military leader could not maintain contact with the army community. The officer and military clubs were closed to him. The marshal was subjected to various types of persecution for almost a quarter of a century or a third of his life. And in former times many military leaders and generals were out of favor with monarchs and governments but this did not usually last so long.

Disfavor with Stalin is easily explainable. The "Great" could not tolerate those leaders the renown of which in the people, even partially, surpassed his popularity. But it is surprising that the great popularity of G.K. Zhukov in the people and envy for his glory were the main reasons for the second period of disfavor for the military leader. These reasons were not mentioned but they were understood.

One of the vivid examples of the fear of G.K. Zhukov's glory was the "maneuvering" by L.I. Brezhnev and his supporters in order to prevent the presence at the 24th CPSU Congress of the military leader who had been elected by the Moscow Oblast Party Organization. L.I. Brezhnev and his henchmen were afraid that the very fact of G.K. Zhukov's presence at the congress could even temporarily overshadow with his popularity with the personality of the General Secretary himself and this was not to be part of their plans. Historical experience shows that the disgrace of national heroes and the labeling of them as traitors and conspirators have frequently evoked the reverse response among the population. At the same time, the label of "Bonapartist" awkwardly applied to G.K. Zhukov frightened away certain researchers, writers and journalists. For this reason over a period of 2 decades, the number of articles on the activities of the military leader could be counted on the fingers of one hand. For example, on the 70th anniversary of the military leader, only one article about him was published (VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL No 11, 1966). Our press was also silent on the 80th anniversary of the marshal. Obviously, the label of "Bonapartist" was still effective. Another decade passed. The fear of the "Bonapartist" was forgotten and articles on the life and activities of the military leader began appearing in many organs of the periodical press. In the publications devoted to the 90th anniversary of G.K. Zhukov, new facts were taken up which we had not known previously. Certain authors also endeavored to formulate characteristic traits in his generalship activities. Of course, the materials about him were not devoid of major shortcomings. Objectivity was violated in the treatment of the historical individual. In a number of instances his shortcomings were downplayed while he

was ascribed qualities which he did not possess. Historians above all else were guilty of these shortcomings. They still had not carried out profound research which would be employed as reliable guidelines in the publishing activities concerned with military leaders. Of all the publications devoted to the activities of G.K. Zhukov, I would like to point out the Simonov "Notes on the Biography of G.K. Zhukov" published in VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in 1987 (see: Nos. 6, 7, 9, 10, 12).

The value of these "Notes" is that they quote judgments, thoughts and assessments of the military leader which would help restore the historical truth about numerous events of the previous war. Among them one would put: the scientific assessment of the state of our army and the Wehrmacht before the war, the reasons for the miscalculations by the strategic leadership before the attack on the USSR, statements by the military leader on certain political and military figures and so forth. In truth, a significant portion of these notes had been published under the title "Marshal Zhukov. Fragments From a Documentary Narrative" (the authors Igor Itskov and Marina Babak, OGONEK Nos. 48-51, 1986).

Unfortunately, in recording the thoughts and statements of the military leader, a number of inaccuracies and dubious judgments were made and these turned up in the "Fragments" and then in the articles in VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL. Since the "Fragments" were published in a run of over a million, we will point out these inaccuracies following the text found in OGONEK.

In the current article we would like to set out certain ideas on the activities of G.K. Zhukov and describe conversations with this outstanding master of military affairs.¹ In taking up individual questions we will draw on other materials collected in encounters with other military leaders.

2. Thoughts on the Qualities of a Military Leader

Simultaneously with the publication of the "Fragments," materials on the activities of G.K. Zhukov appeared in many press organs. From my viewpoint, of significant interest was the conversation between the writer V. Karpov and the journalist V. Peskov (see: KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA, 30 November 1986). In talking about the qualities of the military leader, the writer correctly pointed out that G.K. Zhukov possessed an iron will, a powerful intellect and vast knowledge gained by self-education. In history military figures who possessed all these qualities did not appear so often.

Here are some thoughts on this question as voiced by certain military leaders. Napoleon, for instance, felt that a military leader should have a definite balance between mind (talent) and will (character, courage); if character prevailed over mind, then the military leader often acted incorrectly and, on the contrary, he acted indecisively if

mind prevailed over bravery.² His contemporary Mar Marmont, in reviewing the ratio between the basic generalship qualities, gave preference to will. "If strength of will is more strongly developed than mental activity," he pointed out, "there is greater probability that the goal will be reached. If mind prevails over character, there is a constant switching of decisions, goals and plans...."³

In assessing the generalship qualities of G.K. Zhukov, it must be said directly that he was very generously endowed with will. Here his iron will and inquisitive mind were within the required proportions and this noticeably distinguished him from the galaxy of other military leaders.

Due to the fact that among the belligerents it was very rare to see military leaders with the required qualities, measures were taken so that their major shortcomings could be localized by the assigning of gifted and effective chiefs of staff to them. Such a practice was particularly widespread in the German Army (Gen Gneisenau under Field Mar Blucher, Gen Ludendorff under Field Mar Hindenburg).

The experience of numerous wars have shown that the gaps in the intellectual and organizational abilities of military leaders and a lack of knowledge can in some ways be compensated for. But as for volitional qualities, these cannot be completely made up for. If a military superior lacks will he will not usually become a military leader. Harsh measures by the procurators and military tribunals cannot replace this.

The iron will of G.K. Zhukov found its expression in a severe view, in the categoricness of judgments, in the brevity and terseness of words, in maximum preciseness of language and in a "metallic" voice. "Profound internal and external self-control," wrote his deputy Lt Gen N.A. Antipenko later, "smartness, great exactingness, linearity and principledness in views and in relations with others, iron will and the inability to adapt to bend to anyone else's attitudes and opinions—these were the character traits which evoked in me profound respect for Zhukov."⁴

During the years of the Great Patriotic War, G.K. Zhukov demonstrated outstanding examples of purposefulness and tenacity in carrying out complex operational and strategic tasks. In critical situations he did not fear responsibility for his own decisions and actions. Here is an example. During the period of the Battle of Moscow the Commander of the 16th Army, Gen K.K. Rokossovskiy, was able over the head of the commander of the Western Front, G.K. Zhukov, to secure permission from the chief of the General Staff to pull back the troops. Although a pullback of the troops in this situation was advisable, G.K. Zhukov sent off the following telegram to the commander of the 16th Army: "I command the troops of the front! I am canceling the order to pull back the troops to the Istra Reservoir and I order a defense on the occupied line and not a single step back...."⁵

Here is one other example of his impact on subordinates. In the course of the Berlin Operation, one of the senior combat associates of G.K. Zhukov, Col Gen V.I. Kuznetsov, informed the staff of the front that the enemy's employment of a large number of bazookas was slowing down the advance of the army. Here is the reply from G.K. Zhukov: "After the war you can tell your grandchildren about the bazookas, but for now advance without any arguments."

An element accompanying this iron will of the military leader was also unjustified stubbornness and harshness which an objective researcher cannot ignore. It seems to me that of all the evidence in this regard the remembrances of K.K. Rokossovskiy merit the greatest trust. He had known G.K. Zhukov for almost a half-century. At times, their service careers had crossed: in his youth, G.K. Zhukov was a subordinate of K.K. Rokossovskiy while during the years of his generalship maturity, K.K. Rokossovskiy was subordinate to G.K. Zhukov.

In the summer of 1966, the journalist P. Troyanovskiy and I happened to visit K.K. Rokossovskiy at his dacha. Here is what he told us. At the beginning of the 1930s, G.K. Zhukov was in command of a brigade which was part of the 7th Samara Cavalry Division under the command of K.K. Rokossovskiy. G.K. Zhukov, in the words of K.K. Rokossovskiy, was a well-trained and very demanding commander. But this demandingness often developed into unjustified severity and even coarseness. Such actions evoked dissatisfaction among many of his subordinates, complaints arrived in the division and the command had to handle them. Attempts to influence the brigade commander were unsuccessful. We were forced, continued K.K. Rokossovskiy, in the aims of improving the situation in the brigade to "promote" G.K. Zhukov to a superior position in the cavalry inspectorate.

The following instance comes to mind. In the summer of 1965, at the Canal imeni Moscow, they were photographing the documentary "If You Love Your Home." The writers of the film were also here (K. Simonov and Ye. Vorobyev). According to the idea of the film's director V. Ordynskiy, Mar K.K. Rokossovskiy in front of a microphone was to share his remembrances about a discussion held over the telephone with I.V. Stalin during crucial moments of the Battle of Moscow. But during the filming of the scene, K.K. Rokossovskiy suddenly interrupted his narration of the talk with I.V. Stalin and began to speak about the unworthy and coarse escapades of G.K. Zhukov during the period of the Battle of Moscow.

Over the years, many aspects in the character of G.K. Zhukov have undergone change. But many shortcomings have remained and this has harmed him. These shortcomings gave rise to an antipathy for the military leader among a certain part of the command personnel and contributed to the spread of unfavorable rumors about him in the army. Obviously, for this reason he at times

during critical moments of his life, for example, in the autumn of 1957, was deprived of the required support from many of his wartime associates.

Certain authors, in endeavoring to overemphasize the positive qualities of the military leaders, unjustifiably deprive them of the right to doubt. "Fragments" is also to blame in this regard.⁶ Here is one phrase which out of some misunderstanding has been ascribed to G.K. Zhukov: "When you do something, bear responsibility for it and decide: here there is no room for doubts in oneself or uncertainty" (OGONEK No. 48, p 7). Such a phrase in the mouth of an experienced military leader sounds more than strange. Possibly, he was misunderstood.

As experience shows, in a war, particularly in working out decisions, doubts do arise not over the particular features of the military leader's character but are brought about by the nature of armed combat as a two-sided process. Before the initiating of military operations and in the course of them, the belligerents have always concealed and will conceal their intentions and plans, the grouping of forces and the positioning of reserves. For precisely these reasons, M.I. Kutuzov refused to give battle in the area of Tsarevo Zaymishche, he doubted the necessity of fighting at Borodino, he permitted a discussion of the question of the defense of Moscow at the military council in Fili and so forth. All these actions of the military leader can be explained by the lack of clarity of the situation and a reticence to act by chance.

And how many similar situations there were during the years of the Great Patriotic War! For example, take the September days of 1941 at Leningrad. For several days G.K. Zhukov doubted the reliability of information about the enemy as reported to him by intelligence. He considered the first data about the start of the shifting of certain enemy panzer units from around Leningrad toward Moscow as provocative and ordered a check on who was responsible for this.⁷ Only a few days later was the fact of the weakening of enemy troops around Leningrad confirmed. The military leader also had numerous doubts in taking decisions in other critical situations. These were also observed in the concluding operations of the Great Patriotic War when our troops significantly surpassed the enemy and Nazi Germany was living through its last days. The basic reasons for the hesitations were the contradictory data on the force of enemy resistance on the Seelow Hills and so forth. All these doubts were completely justified. Even after the war G.K. Zhukov stated that "the defeat of the Berlin enemy grouping and the taking of Berlin itself could have been done somewhat differently."⁸

Often various doubts developed in the marshal due to changes in the weather conditions which could not be forecast by our meteorologists. The history of the Great Patriotic War has preserved numerous examples for us when continuing rains and heavy fogs hanging over the battlefields greatly complicated the conduct of hostilities: tanks in masses became stuck in the mud and in

crossings over rivers, aviation because of bad flying weather for hours and at times for days was tethered to the airfields while artillery was deprived of the opportunity to fire accurately at major targets of the enemy defenses.

In "Fragments" there are also other examples where G.K. Zhukov sets out rather dubious and at times completely wrong ideas. Some light is shed on the nature of their occurrence by one fact which in itself is not important but discloses the work methods of the authors of "Fragments." "...Probably far from everyone knows," they write, "that the first person to decide to count how many nights and days the war lasted was Konstantin Mikhaylovich Simonov. He said this for the first time in the film 'There Went the Soldier...' with 1,400 and 18, commencing with 22 June 1941" (OGONEK No. 49, p 7). Let us take a look at what the case was in reality. The documentary of K.M. Simonov "There Went the Soldier..." came out in 1975 (MOSKOVSKAYA PRAVDA, 29 April 1975). As for the figures on the length of the war in days, this had been put into scholarly circulation even at the beginning of 1960, that is, 15 years before the mentioned film appeared (VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL No. 1, 1960, p 18).⁹ In "Fragments" there are also other dubious places.

For example, one cannot agree with the assertion that G.K. Zhukov supposedly regretted that he had been unable to acquire "knowledge of biology, natural sciences which one encounters...in one's purely military reflections" (OGONEK No. 48, p 7). We are uncertain in what operations or campaigns the military leader felt a need for biology. But we are well aware of what he personally required and what he taught his subordinates. In his words, the volume and complexity of military knowledge has so increased that even two human lives would not be enough to master this fully. For this reason he constantly recommended that the officers not waste their time but rather focus their efforts on studying military affairs.

We also cannot imagine the military leader in the role of a gallant swordsman who allowed himself to belittle the "professors erudition." He, for example, has been quoted for the phrase: "Some of our highly educated military men and professors who ended up in a position of the commanders of various fronts in the war, did not show themselves off for the best.... At times, they proposed superficial solutions for difficult problems which went beyond their professorial erudition" (OGONEK No. 50, p 8). The words "some" and "at times" do not eliminate and do not even weaken the erroneousness of such assertions. If one speaks about the authors of superficial decisions, then they were most often encountered among those gallant swordsmen who over the 2 decades after the Civil War did not learn anything but merely boasted that they "had not finished academies."

As for the highly educated representatives of faculties, many of them were talented creators of our operational-strategic plans and brilliant executors of these plans. We

might merely mention some of them who held high posts in the army. There was the Chief of the General Staff A.I. Antonov, the front commanders who later became marshals Soviet Union, such as I.Kh. Bagramyan, L.A. Govorov and R.Ya. Malinovskiy. Scores and hundreds of highly educated representatives of the faculties from academies gained fame in the positions of army commanders, chiefs of staff of the fronts and armies and formation commanders. We might point out that the drafts of many plans for our brilliant offensive operations were worked out under the leadership of Army Gen A.I. Antonov. G.K. Zhukov had high regard for the generalship qualities of I.Kh. Bagramyan and L.A. Govorov and did a great deal to promote their careers.

The articles also highly praise the intellectual capabilities of G.K. Zhukov. But in a number of instances this praise arouses argument. For example, the writer V.V. Karpov sees the main indication of the intellectual capability of the military leader in the fact that he was able "to process an enormous amount of information and to think both for himself and for the enemy."

Although military leaders were involved in the "processing" of the most important information, all the same this task was carried out predominantly by the staffs which for this employed many score experienced operators, intelligence officers and other specialists. At the same time, the chiefs of staff of the fronts, particularly Gens V.D. Sokolovskiy and M.S. Malinin, did everything possible to free G.K. Zhukov from enormous flows of information. Under these conditions the military leader could focus his penetrating mind and rich intuition completely on penetrating to the heart of the occurring events, on a careful analysis of the existing situation, on disclosing trends in its development and possible changes. It must be pointed out that G.K. Zhukov demonstrated outstanding examples of a thorough assessment of the situation and the forecasting of events. As an illustration of this, we will give just two examples.

On 19 August 1941, G.K. Zhukov, as commander of the Reserve Front, sent to Headquarters Supreme High Command [Hq SHC] a report with an assessment of the strategic situation. It pointed out that the enemy was temporarily giving up the continuation of the drive against Moscow and was concentrating its forces in order "by an attack from the rear to defeat the armies of the Southwestern Front" and that with the carrying out of this task the Nazi Command would launch two thrusts: a main thrust against Moscow and a secondary thrust against the Donbass.¹⁰ The Supreme High Command, unfortunately, did not consider the prediction of G.K. Zhukov and for this our troops had to pay greatly. After the defeat of the Southwestern Front, as G.K. Zhukov had predicted, there followed enemy thrusts against Moscow and into the Donbass.

The forecasts and predictions of G.K. Zhukov played an exceptionally important role in the victorious outcome of the Kursk Battle in the summer of 1943. "It would be

better," he wrote to the Supreme Commander-in-Chief, "if we ground the enemy down on our defenses and then, in committing fresh reserves, we would go over to the offensive and finally take the main enemy grouping."¹¹ This time the conclusions from an analysis of the situation and the proposals of G.K. Zhukov were taken into account and this was of important significance in the course and outcome of the Kursk Battle.

(to be continued)

Footnotes

1. In 1965-1966, VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL which at that time I headed published the articles and memoirs of G.K. Zhukov on the Moscow and Berlin Operations. Of course, I used such a favorable opportunity for meetings and talks with the legendary military leader. Particularly useful for me were the meetings with him in the summer and autumn of 1966, when we were preparing for publication in our journal an article devoted to his 70th birthday. At the same time, they were filming the documentary about the Battle of Moscow ("If You Love Your Home"). The sequence about G.K. Zhukov was filmed in his suburban home in Sosnovka. As a consultant for this film, I happened to be present several times during the talks of G.K. Zhukov with the writer K.M. Simonov.
2. Ye. Moshnin, "Voyennyye otkliki" [Military Responses], St. Petersburg, 1902, p 85.
3. Ibid.
4. N.A. Antipenko, "Na glavnom napravlenii" [On the Main Sector], Moscow, Nauka, 1971, p 229.
5. K.K. Rokossovskiy, "Soldatskiy dolg" [A Soldier's Duty], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1985, p 82.
6. In certain places in "Fragments" thoughts and words are ascribed to G.K. Zhukov which are contradictory to the essence of military affairs, to the character and views of the military leader. In a number of instances we draw the attention of the readers to these errors.
7. B. Bychevskiy, "Gorod-front" [The Front City], Leningrad, Lenizdat, 1967, pp 116, 124.
8. G.K. Zhukov, "Vospominaniya i razmyshleniya" [Reminiscences and Reflections], Moscow, Izd-vo APN, 1969, p 643.
9. The article where these figures are given in 1960 was reprinted in many European countries including Bulgaria, Poland, the GDR, Czechoslovakia and elsewhere.
10. G.K. Zhukov, op. cit., p 308.
11. Ibid., p 458.

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Who Is to Blame?

00010003c Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY
ZHURNAL in Russian No 10, Oct 88 (signed to press
23 Sep 88) pp 21-28

[Article, published under the heading "Discussions and Debates," by Lt Gen (Res) P.V. Maltsev, candidate of military sciences: "Who Is to Blame? (Certain Questions on the Organization and Implementation of Troop Command on the Western Front on the Eve and in the Initial Period of the War); Pavel Vasilyevich Maltsev in 1940-1941 was an officer candidate at the Pukhovicheskii Military Infantry School. He participated in the Great Patriotic War from 27 June 1941 as the commander of a machine gun platoon from the 468th Rifle Regiment of the 111th Rifle Division on the Northwestern Front. He ended the war as the chief of the Operations Section of the I Guards Rifle Corps of the First Baltic Front]

[Text] In taking up the events in the initial period of the Great Patriotic War the participants of the debate draw attention to the poor command of the Soviet troops and sometimes the loss of this. In the proposed article we would like to bring out certain questions in the organization of command in the Western Special Military District (from 22 June 1941, the Western Front) during the prewar years and with the start of hostilities.

On the eve of the war, command and control were organized in accord with the provisions of the 1936 Provisional Field Manual, the Draft of the 1940 Field Manual, and the 1936 Provisional Regulation on the Field Service of the Troop Staffs. The essence of command and control in an operation, as was pointed out in these documents, consisted in maintaining the high combat readiness of the formations and units; in organizing and conducting continuous reconnaissance, in the constant acquiring and analysis of situational data, the taking of decisions for the operation and the prompt issuing of tasks to subordinates; in organizing cooperation between the elements of the operational configuration, combat arms and adjacent units. An important task was the organizing of supervision over the execution of issued orders and instructions, the complete support of the troops and the work of the rear bodies and communications equipment.¹ The art of command consisted, on the basis of a thorough and profound analysis of the situation, in predicting the development and course of the operations, correctly assessing the possible enemy counteractions, taking the necessary measures to overcome enemy resistance and achieve the goals of the operation.

The execution of these functions was entrusted to the headquarters of a military district (front) and this consisted of the district (front) staff and a number of directorates (sections) subordinate to the commander

the the military council. The basic working body was the staff which consisted of several sections. The leading section was operations and its chief had the rights of a deputy chief of staff.

During the first half of the 1930s, in the Belorussian Military District (from 29 July 1938, the Belorussian Special Military District) training was intensely and thoroughly carried out for preparing the staffs and troops to repulse possible aggression from the West: major exercises and maneuvers were conducted, including the widely-known 1936 maneuvers. However, in the course of the repressions of 1937-1938, the well-trained and practically experienced personnel was eliminated. Their place was taken literally on the eve of the war by generals and officers who were totally dedicated to the party and the people but who did not have sufficient skills in leading large formations and operational field forces under wartime conditions. Moreover, many of them had reduced initiative and were afraid of responsibility for the consequences of their actions.

Effective training in the district (from 11 July 1940, the Western Special Military District or ZapOVO) was also conducted intensely before the war. Its commander did a great deal of work in this area. Thus, from August 1940, Army Gen D.G. Pavlov personally conducted a front military game, five army field trips, an army command-staff military game in the field, five corps military games, radio training with two mechanized corps, corps drill and two divisional drills with the troops under winter conditions. Moreover, the General Staff in October 1940 conducted a front field trip with the district headquarters.² In the course of these, a significant lag was apparent in the training level of the commanders and their staffs behind the requirements of armed combat and in organizing cooperation under various situational conditions. The party-governmental commission which inspected the state of the Armed Forces in 1940 pointed out that these negative factors "with the presence of young and insufficiently experienced personnel have led to a lag on a number of questions related to the preparing of the army for war."³

At that time the absence of the corresponding instructions of official training aids was a major shortcoming in the operational training of the commanders and their staffs. To a certain degree this gap was made up by documents from a conference of leading military workers at the end of 1940. But its materials were available only to a narrow group of individuals and by the start of the war the command personnel had not fully assimilated these.

A major drawback in the system of command of the district and armies by the start of the war was the underequipping of the staffs with personnel, communications equipment and transport according to the wartime TOE. An analysis of the archival documents indicates that certain field headquarters of the armies were understaffed even according to the peacetime TOE. For

example, the headquarters of the 13th Army (commander, Lt Gen P.M. Filatov; chief of staff, Col A.V. Petrushevskiy) began to be constituted in the first half of May 1941. On 21 June, it was 40 percent up to strength in terms of personnel, 20 percent in terms of equipment and did not have any communications equipment. There were lacking 64 men of the superior personnel.⁴

A most important means for the direct control of the troops was communications. However, the district signals troops lacked even on regulation equipment. They were supplied as follows: for radios (by 26-27 percent for army and airfield, 7 percent for corps and divisional, 41 for regimental and 58 percent for battalion), equipment (56 percent for telegraph and 50 percent for telephone) and cable (20 percent for telegraph and 42 percent for telephone).⁵

Communications with the troops was basically based upon the permanent telephone and telegraph lines of the USSR People's Commissariat of Communications. The chief shortcomings in its preparations for war were: the building of the state wire network according to the radial principle, whereby the centers and communications lines were concentrated in large industrial and administrative centers; the absence of communications centers and bypasses around the large population points; the locating of communications centers in quarters not protected against enemy aviation; the presence of only overhead communications lines running along the highways and railroads, the absence of cable and underground lines. All of this increased the vulnerability of the communications lines.

It must be pointed out that the available building materials in the bodies of the People's Commissariat of Communications on the district's territory for building and repairing the permanent communications lines in the event of a war, according to the report of the district chief of staff, Maj Gen V.Ye. Klimovskikh, could satisfy only 10-20 percent of the needs in the conduct of a front operation in the initial period of the war.⁶

Neither in organizational nor material terms was radio communications ready to carry out combat tasks. The training of radio operators did not correspond to the required level. The issuing of radio operating data to the subordinate staffs in the event of a war was planned for the mobilization period.

Thus, the command system for the district troops on the eve of the war did not fully meet the demands placed on it. The military councils of the district and the armies had little idea of the nature of possible actions with a surprise attack by the aggressor. The commanders and staffs did not have firm skills in preparing the operations and in organizing and maintaining cooperation between the branches of troops. In addition, the initiative of the commanders was fettered by all sorts of prohibitions

"until special orders." The system of command and signals points was very poorly prepared and not securely camouflaged. The consequences of this became apparent with the start of the war.

On 22 June 1941, at around 0100 hours the staff of the ZapOVO received a coded message indicating that the troops were to be immediately brought to combat readiness for the event of repelling an attack expected in the morning. At 0225 hours, an analogous order was issued to the armies and fortified areas. However, the enemy sabotage groups dropped into our rear after 0200 hours destroyed the wire communications. By morning, this had been broken with all the armies. Moreover, in the latter the radios had been destroyed or damaged. This was carried out by paratroop assault forces of varying size, for example, in the Radun and Nachi area, according to unverified data, there was an assault force operating of up to 1,000 men.⁷

As telegraph communications were restored, the troops received the instructions of the front military council to go on combat alert. But the armies received this too late and they were only able to decode the instructions and issued individual orders. It must be said that the codes and code tables were extraordinarily complex and required a great deal of time to work out operational documents. For this reason, often the commanders issued orders to the troops in open text and this was used by the enemy. The disrupting of communications at a crucial moment and the limited time to transmit orders did not make it possible for the staffs to issue the combat alert signal to a majority of the formations and many of them had not taken up the defensive line on time. But still certain commanders, without fearing responsibility, alerted their subordinates. For example, the commander of the 86th Rifle Division, Col M.A. Zashibalov, having received at 0200 hours on 22 June information from the chief of the border patrol that the Nazis were preparing to cross the Western Bug, alerted the units and reported on this to the corps commander.

However, the command of the front had instructions from the people's commissar of defense "not to succumb to the slightest provocative actions." Only an hour and a half later was it convinced that a war had started. At 0525 hours, Army Gen D.G. Pavlov issued the following battle order to the troops of the 3d, 10th and 4th Armies: "Due to mass military operations initiated by the Germans, I order that the troops be brought to full alert."⁸ But the given order was late and many formations and units of the cover armies were already fighting.

The situation was even worse for the second echelon formations. Thus, the XVII Mechanized Corps (commander, Maj Gen M.P. Petrov) was alerted by the district staff at 0545 hours. His men learned about the start of hostilities after the radio speech by V.M. Molotov, regardless of the fact that contact with the front staff existed. The corps was given its task only in the evening.

The war caught the district's formations in the stage of mobilization. Along with them the headquarters bodies were being brought up to strength and this could not help but tell on their activities. Moreover, during the first hours of the war many officers perished as a result of actions by German sabotage groups and the personnel of the signals units suffered from effective air strikes. Thus, the signals battalion in the XIV Mechanized Corps (commander, Maj Gen S.I. Oborin) in the morning of 22 June, lost 70 percent of its personnel from enemy bombing while the corps staff had 20 percent of its TOE strength.⁹

During the first hours of the war, the army commanders and staffs also did not take independent decisions, with the exception of alerting the troops. Having become convinced that aggression had started, they endeavored to carry out the plans for covering the state frontier but these did not correspond to the developing situation. Due to the loss of control, the front's staff did not know the true status of its troops or the scale of combat. This prevented them from informing the General Staff truthfully about the state of affairs in the front's zone. For supervising and providing aid in organizing command and control, during the first day of the war arriving at the front's staff were the deputy people's commissars of defense, MSUs B.M. Shaposhnikov and G.I. Kulik, with a group of generals from the General Staff. But they were unable to figure out the developing situation. It was no accident that in the evening of the same day, the people's commissar of defense demanded that the front go over to an offensive in the aim of defeating the enemy grouping which had broken in and shifting combat to enemy territory. Army Gen D.G. Pavlov took a decision and issued orders to the troops but the orders no longer corresponded to reality and under the conditions of the loss of control the task was not received by many staffs.

On 24 June, the commander of the 3d Army, Lt Gen V.I. Kuznetsov, reported: "...The lines to Volkovysk, Lida are largely destroyed and I am unable to repair them with my own forces. I have only one radio for communication with the front staff. I have not had any guidelines from the front for 2 days." The commander did not know what was being done on the flanks, as contact was lacking with the 11th Army of the Northwestern Front and with the 10th Army. As a result, regardless of the heroic resistance by the Western Front, the enemy by 0600 hours on 22 June had advanced 4-5 km.¹⁰ The commander of the 4th Army, Maj Gen A.A. Korobkov, reported: "Communications, command and control of the troops...are extremely difficult due to the complete absence of wire communications and the shortage (because of losses) of radios and mobile facilities."¹¹ "The start of the Patriotic War caught radio communications on the army level in a completely disorganized state: there were neither centralized radio traffic procedures or instructions on organizing radio communications from the staff of the Western Military District..." recalled the signals chief of the 13th Army, Col I.F. Akhremenko, subsequently.¹²

Thus, on 22 June the front commander and staff lost organized control over the troops. This happened because the enemy which had ahead of time gained data on the location of our control posts, communications centers and lines, was able to knock out a significant portion of them with the first air strikes. The communications centers and particularly the communications lines the security for which had been unsatisfactorily organized, were put out of operation by enemy agents and various sabotage groups the possible activities of which with the start of the war had been underestimated by the front and army staffs.

Under the arising conditions, the front's chief of staff took all measures within his power to restore contact with the troops and organize control of them. However, the significant losses of communications equipment during the first hours of the war, the difficulties of replacing them and the systematic repeated enemy strikes against the staffs, communications centers and lines thwarted all measures to restore contact with the troops.

Of important significance was the great distance of the control posts from the troops. Thus, the staff of the 4th Army (chief, Col L.M. Sandalov) by the end of 22 June was 50 km from the front line. A similar picture was observed in the 10th Army (chief of staff, Maj Gen P.I. Lyapin), and with the movement of its staff to Vavily it was over 100 km away from its first echelon formations and units. The front's staff was located in Minsk at a distance beyond the range of the army radios. Its auxiliary control post, in not having a communications centers, was unable to influence the course of battle.

The situation did not change on 23 June. The formations assigned for the counterstrike were scattered through the entire zone of the front. The absence of firm and uninterrupted command did not make it possible to assemble them and launch a concentrated strike against the enemy which had broken through. Communications, as on the first day of the war, operated irregularly and with great and extended interruptions.¹³ It was restored only briefly by radio with the 3d and 10th Armies.

During the night of 24 June, the commander of the front adjusted the tasks for the troops. He decided by committing the reserves on both flanks and by a simultaneous counterstrike of two mechanized corps from the Grodno area to the north against the enemy 3d Panzer Group, to bring about a major change in the course of the fighting in our favor. However, this decision did not correspond to the situation as the corps by this time had suffered heavy losses and did not have contact with the retreating formations and adjacent units or an air cover. Moreover, in the course of preparing the operation a number of the workers of the staff and the headquarters of the Western Front as well as individual army and formation commanders were guilty of holding conversations in open text on important questions, without employing codes and code tables. Officials and units were given by name.

Such use of communications equipment made it possible for the enemy to monitor the calls and be up on the intended actions of our troops.

From the morning of 24 June, enemy aviation began bombing Minsk. The district staff was also hit with the front commander at the staff. In line with this a decision was taken to move it to a command post in the Borovoy area. The relocation there further impeded command as there was no equipped communications center there.¹⁴ Attempts to restore the lost command using field liaison officers with mobile equipment (the U-2 and SB aircraft, armored vehicles and cars) did not produce positive results. In the first place, the front did not possess previously assigned mobile equipment and this had to be sought out in the course of the fighting; secondly, enemy aviation destroyed these facilities both in the air and on the ground. Measures were taken through the offices of the commander of the border troops of the Belorussian NKVD [People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs] and he was ordered "through the border troops who have a good knowledge of the terrain to establish contact, ensure mutual information and the receipt of directives and orders from the front staff to the 50th Rifle Division, XXI Rifle Corps, the staff of the 3d Army and the group of troops in the Belovezhskaya Forest and the 75th Rifle Division."¹⁵

The front's commander continued to issue one battle order after another but these did not take into account the real situation which had developed since the first day of the war. Moreover, the front staff did not know whether the orders were reaching the troops. Thus, at 1540 hours on 25 June, the commander of the VI Mechanized Corps was issued an order to disengage and by a forced march to concentrate near Slonim. At the same time, the commanders of the 3d, 4th, 10th and 13th Armies in a directive were ordered to retreat from the held lines no later than by 2100 hours. The front staff did not know whether these instructions had been received by subordinates.¹⁶

All of this predetermined the unsuccessful outcome of the fighting during the period of retreat. There was no rapid disengagement of the main forces of the armies. By the end of 28 June, the enemy had cut the escape routes of the Soviet troops which were on the Belostok Salient. On the next day, the enemy surrounded the left-flank formations of the 10th Army to the southeast of Volkovysk, as well as up to 11 divisions of the 3d, 4th and 13th Armies in the Minsk area. Cut off from the remaining forces of the front and deprived of centralized command, control and communications, the surrounded troops continued fighting until 8 July, having tied down around 25 divisions or almost one-half of Army Group Center.

The loss of control over the troops, an ignorance of the true state of affairs and, hence, hurry in the taking of decisions which were often unrealistic and unfeasible as well as the lack of supervision over the execution of the

issued orders, in our view, show the bewilderment of the front command and, possibly, the inability to command the field forces (formations) in a difficult combat situation. Examples from the activities of the front's staff at that time can serve as confirmation of this.

On 22 June, the Field Headquarters of the 13th Army was sent to Novogrudki and then was redirected to the Molodechno area, where it arrived at 1800 hours on 23 June, without having either troops at its disposal or tasks set by the front. Only at 2100 hours on 24 June did the staff receive instructions which gave the strength of the army and the task of an offensive. But there was no indication as to where these formations and their staffs might be, and the date for the start of the offensive was also not given. Nevertheless, the commander at 2230 hours took a decision and through the field liaison officers endeavored to set tasks for subordinates. The army headquarters itself from 0200 hours on 25 June moved to a new command post, where at dawn in an area 2 km to the north of Gorodok it was attacked by enemy tanks and lost up to 50 percent of the personnel as well as certain operational and coded documents. Its remnants reached Zhdanovichi. Without receiving instructions from the front, the commander took command of units from the XLIV and II Rifle Corps which were fighting here and which prior to this had been without command.¹⁷

At around 0400 hours on 26 June, the front's staff received data (source unknown) that enemy tanks were breaking through on the axis Zaslavl, Minsk. Immediately a decision was taken to move the staff to the Bobruysk area. The headquarters began moving in small groups there. When a portion of them was enroute, and certain ones had already arrived in Bobruysk, new instructions came to move to the Mogilev area. Thus, during 26 and the night of 27 June, the front staff was constantly in motion. During this time command of the troops was virtually absent.¹⁸ The commander of the front could not influence the course of events at a time when the fate of the 10th Army and many formations was being determined in the zone of the front. The defeat of the Soviet troops to the west of Minsk was one of the consequences of such leadership by the front and the military council.

In the aim of stabilizing the front on a line of the Western Dvina and the Dnieper, Headquarters moved reserves there from the interior of the nation. Moreover, on 1 July it included in the Western Front (acting commander from 30 June through 2 July, Lt Gen A.I. Yeremenko) the troops of the reserve armies. In essence a new Western Front was established. MSU S.K. Timoshenko was appointed its commander on 2 July 1941 with Lt Gen G.K. Malandin as chief of staff. Undoubtedly, in such a difficult situation it was beyond their power to restore the lost command over the field forces and formations. As was reported by the chief of staff of the front on 2 July 1941 to the General Staff, "the

signals units of the Western Front have not been mobilized and this was reported to the signals chief of the Red Army on 29 June 1941.... The signals units of the 3d, 4th and 13th Armies have losses from 50 to 100 percent. The arriving headquarters of the 16th Army lost its signals battalion in studying the route of march."¹⁹ Under these conditions the orders and instructions as before often did not reach the troops and if they did they were greatly delayed and no longer corresponded to the developing situation. The reserves of the front entered battle separately. Cooperation both between the armies and between the troops of the Western and Northwestern Fronts was also not organized. The staffs showed indecisiveness in their work and this led to a loss of time which was used by the enemy for organizing counteractions.

Thus, even the first fighting indicated that the system of command for the Western Front did not meet the requirements of armed combat and did not provide the most efficient utilization of the available forces. A majority of all levels of commanders were unable to thoroughly analyze the developing situation, to draw the appropriate conclusions and take effective decisions. The staffs were unprepared to organize and support continuous troop command and were forced to reorganize their work in the difficult situation of the outbreak of war.

A serious cause for the loss of command was the low combat and organizational readiness of the troops and staffs on the eve of the war as well as the ambiguity of the operational and tactical tasks set for the front (offensive and defensive). Moreover, the commanders and staffs were unable in the limited time available to study and assess the situation to take a sound decision, to issue it to subordinates and organize cooperation. The decisions were frequently taken without the required intelligence data about the enemy as well as information about our own troops and without careful analysis of the situation. The battle tasks received from the superior staff were immediately issued to the troops without the appropriate planning and support. Subsequently, they were repeatedly adjusted and often changed. This led to a situation where the field forces and formations entered battle under conditions which were very disadvantageous for them and did not execute the set tasks.

The command posts of all levels of staffs were not prepared to work under field conditions. The difficult situation at the outset of the war forced the command of the front and the armies to frequently move command posts and shift them over significant distances. Here the locations were chosen randomly and not prepared for ahead of time. The moving of the command post to a new place was not planned ahead of time and correspondingly was carried out in a disorganized manner. Often even before arrival in the designated area, a decision was taken to move them to another and the subordinate staffs were not informed of this.

A great deal of time was taken up at the new command posts of the front in organizing communications. Thus, over the period from 22 through 30 July, this was reestablished in five different areas with the presence of one signals regiment in the front's staff. This led to the loss of troop command.

One of the reasons for the loss of command over the field forces and formations on the front in the initial period of the war was the undependable operation of communications. With the start of hostilities, the enemy succeeded in damaging our telephone and telegraph lines of the state and local communications and on which troop communications was chiefly based. The failure here, in the absence of radio communications or the inability to use it, led to the loss of command. The front and army were unable to provide line communications with their own forces as they did not have sufficient equipment and manned communications units.

For the defeat of the Western Front in the initial period of the war, its commander Army Gen D.G. Pavlov, the chief of staff Maj Gen V.Ye. Klimovskikh and the commander of the 4th Army Maj Gen A.A. Korobkov were removed from their posts and summoned back to Moscow. On 22 July, by a decision of the Military Collegium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, they were condemned to execution. Later, on 27 September 1941, the same sentence was handed down to the artillery chief, Lt Gen Art N.A. Klich.

As was shown by an investigation conducted in 1956 on the investigatory materials, "the charges against Gens Pavlov, Klimovskikh, Grigoryev, Korobkov and Klich were based solely on their own testimony in which they admitted certain of their service failures. This evidence of the accused was not confirmed by any objective proof. In the case there were no operational documents and no competent conclusion on the nature of the oversights by these individuals. "An analysis of the documents available to us (the General Staff.—Editors) and numerous evidence from participants of the initial period of the war refute the assertion of the accusatory information that Pavlov, Klimovskikh, Grigoryev, Korobkov and Klich were guilty of cowardice, inaction, inefficiency, in a conscious breakdown of troop command and the surrendering of weapons without a fight.... The trial initiated against Gens Pavlov, Klimovskikh, Grigoryev, Korobkov and Klich undoubtedly was inspired by I.V. Stalin and the Beriia band in the aim of deflecting from themselves responsibility for the insufficient preparations to repulse enemy aggression."²⁰

In considering the baselessness of the accusations made against the above-indicated generals, the Military Collegium of the USSR Supreme Soviet in 1957-1958 rehabilitated them posthumously.

Footnotes

1. "Vremennyy Polevoy ustav RKKA (PU-36)" [RKKA (Worker-Peasant Red Army) Provisional Field Manual (PU-36)], Moscow, Gosvoyoizdat, 1937, p 59;

"Polevoy ustav Krasnoy Armii 1940 g. Proyekt" [1940 Red Army Field Manual. Draft], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1940, pp 28-29; "Vremennoye nastaveniye po polevoy sluzhbe voyskovykh shtabov" [Provisional Regulation on Field Service of Troop Staffs], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1936, pp 9-10.

2. TsAMO SSSR [Central Archives of the USSR Ministry of Defense], folio 8, inv. 725588, file 36, sheet 294.

3. "Sovetskiye Vooruzhennyye Sily. Voprosy i otvety" [Soviet Armed Forces. Questions and Answers], Moscow, Politizdat, 1987, p 169.

4. TsAMO, folio 361, inv. 6079, file 39, sheet 2; folio 208, inv. 2513, file 71, sheet 30.

5. Ibid., folio 8, inv. 725588, file 36, sheet 25.

6. Ibid., sheets 8-9.

7. Ibid., folio 208, inv. 2511, file 156, sheet 4.

8. Ibid., inv. 2513, file 71, sheet 76.

9. Ibid., folio 318, inv. 4631, file 6, sheet 84.

10. Ibid., folio 500, inv. 12462, file 569, sheet 143.

11. Ibid., folio 208, inv. 2511, file 207, sheets 34-36, 38, 42.

12. Ibid., folio 361, inv. 6101, file 18, sheet 14.

13. Ibid., folio 208, inv. 2511, file 207, sheet 24.

14. Ibid., sheets 32-33.

15. Ibid., file 20, sheet 112.

16. Ibid., file 207, sheet 44.

17. Ibid., folio 361, inv. 6079, file 39, sheets 2-6; folio 208, inv. 2511, file 207, sheet 43.

18. Ibid., folio 208, inv. 2511, file 207, sheet 46.

19. Ibid., inv. 2617, file 9, sheets 4, 48.

20. Ibid., folio 8, inv. 725588, file 36, sheets 1, 40, 41.

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Generals of 1940

00010003d Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 10, Oct 88 (signed to press 23 Sep 88) pp 29-37

[Article, published under the heading "In the Search for the Truth," by I.I. Kuznetsov, doctor of historical sciences, professor: "Generals of 1940"]

[Text] As a result of the unjust mass repressions in 1937-1938, enormous harm was caused to the Red Army: the victims of the false accusations and arbitrary rule were the outstanding Soviet military leaders who had great experience from the Civil War as well as fighting the Nazi aggressors in Spain and the Japanese imperialists in China.

According to the count of one of the repressed commanders and former chief of the Directorate of Higher Military Schools of the RKKA [Worker-Peasant Red Army], Lt Gen A.I. Todorskiy, the victims of Stalin's tyranny included: 3 marshals of the Soviet Union out of 5, 2 army commanders 1st rank out of 4, 12 army commanders 2d rank out of 12, 60 corps commanders out of 67, 136 division commanders out of 199 and 221 brigade commanders out of 397.¹ As a result in the army and navy an acute lack of superior-level command personnel arose. This told negatively on the combat training of the troops and the introduction of new equipment under the conditions of the commenced technical rearming of the Armed Forces. The young commanders who were promoted in place of those eliminated needed help and advice from the senior, more experienced personnel. Such a situation clearly forced I.V. Stalin on the eve and after the 18th VKP(b) [All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik)] Congress to temporarily halt the repressions. The People's Commissar N.I. Yezhov was even accused by him of violating Soviet laws. In 1940, certain repressed commanders were released: the former deputy commander of the VI Cavalry Corps, Brig Cmdr A.V. Gorbatov, the deputy commander of the Moscow Military District, Corps Cmdr L.G. Petrovskiy, the commander of the V Cavalry Corps, Div Cmdr K.K. Rokossovskiy, the commander of the Maritime Group of the Far Eastern Front, Div Cmdr K.L. Podlas, the commander of the 26th Cavalry Division, Brig Cmdr S.P. Zybin, the chief of staff of the Separate Far Eastern Army, Div Cmdr E.Ya. Magon, the commander of the rifle division, Brig Cmdr A.I. Zygin and many others. On the eve of the war and in the first months of it, more than a quarter of those repressed was returned to the army.²

The repressed commanders during the arrests and investigations experienced not only moral and physical hardships but also material ones. This can be judged from the report of Brig Cmdr S.P. Zybin to the deputy people's commissar of defense, Army Commissar 1st Rank Ye.A. Shchadenko: "At the same time, may I request that my difficult situation be considered, as I have spent 34 months under investigation, my health is broken and at

present it is extremely essential that I begin recovering. I strongly request that you grant to me and my family a trip for resort-sanitarium treatment so that I in the future can set to work with full energy to carry out my service duties. I would also request that you provide material aid to me and my family, as we have gone through everything and I myself and my family are greatly in need of this aid. I assure you that I will justify everything by my work. 20 April 1940." To the report was appended the resolution of Ye.A. Shchadenko: "Provide 1) two free trips. 2) Issue uniform." Many commanders ended up in such a situation but their spirit was not broken. They remained loyal to the people and to the Communist Party and they took an active part in the Great Patriotic War. Many of them fell in the fierce fighting of 1940, having carried out their military and party duty to the end. Thus, the commander of the LXIII Rifle Corps of the 21st Army on the Western Front, Lt Gen L.G. Petrovskiy, perished in breaking out of encirclement in August 1941; the commander of the 57th Army of the Southwestern Front, Lt Gen K.P. Podlas, who fought bravely in the Ukraine and at Moscow, fell into an encirclement at Kharkov and perished in May 1942; the commander of the XLV Rifle Corps of the Western Front, Maj Gen E.Ya. Magon, in heavy defensive fighting on the Dnieper, Pronya and Sozh was missing in action in August 1941; the commander of the XXXVII Rifle Corps of the Southwestern Front, Brig Cmdr S.P. Zybin, experienced the bitterness of the hard defensive fighting in the Ukraine and perished in an encirclement in the area of Polotsk at the beginning of August 1941. Maj Gen A.I. Zigin initially commanded a division. For outstanding service in the fighting at Polotsk, he was awarded the Order of Lenin. In August 1941, in breaking out of an encirclement near Velikiye Luki and learning that the main forces of the formation were still surrounded, he again crossed the front line and brought out the remnants of the troops assigned to him to safe territory. Later he was the deputy commander of the 30th Army, the commander of the 58th, 39th and 4th Guards Armies, he distinguished himself in the fighting on the Kalinin Front and in the Ukraine, where he was killed on 27 September 1943 at Poltava holding the rank of lieutenant general.

In May-June 1940, substantial changes were effected in military personnel policy. By the Ukase of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet of 7 May 1940, the ranks of generals and admirals were instituted for the superior combined-arms command personnel and for the command personnel of the combat arms. This measure "most clearly defined the skills of the command personnel as military leaders and completely eliminated the confusion of names of former military ranks with the held positions."³ On the same day, the rank of Marshal of the Soviet Union was awarded to the Chief of the Main Military Directorate G.I. Kulik, to the Chief of the General Staff B.M. Shaposhnikov and to S.K. Timoshenko who was simultaneously made people's commissar of defense. On 4 June 1940, by the decree of the USSR Council of People's Commissars [SNK], the

new ranks were awarded to 982 generals and 74 admirals of the Soviet Armed Forces.⁴ The rank of army general was awarded to G.K. Zhukov, K.A. Meretskov and I.V. Tyulenev, colonel general to I.R. Apanasenko, O.I. Gorodovikov, A.D. Loktionov and G.M. Shtern, colonel general tank troops to D.G. Pavlov, colonel general artillery to N.N. Voronov and V.D. Grendal. In the rank of lieutenant general were 81 combined-arms commanders, 6 commanders of the NKVD [People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs] Troops and 33 commanders of combat arms; the rank of major general to 479 combined-arms commanders and 373 commanders of combat arms. The list of generals and admirals together with their photographs were published by the central newspapers although there was no extreme need for this. Moreover, the material found in the newspapers was quickly employed by the Nazi service. Instances were known when at the very outset of the war Nazi saboteurs using photographs issued to them recognized the Soviet Army commanders in the frontline zone and committed terroristic acts against them.

Seemingly by introducing new ranks in our army, the new command personnel would be differentiated from the old in which there were the brigade, division, corps and army commanders who had been accused of "treachery" but Beriya continued to develop the notion of a so-called "military conspiracy" and a wave of repression descended again on the personnel literally before the war. In 1940-1941, repressions were directed against the Deputy People's Commissar of Defense, Lt Gen P.V. Rychagov, the Chief of the Directorate for National Air Defense Col Gen G.M. Shtern, the Deputy Chief of the General Staff for Aviation Lt Gen Avn Ya.V. Smushkevich, the commander of the Baltic Special Military District, Col Gen A.D. Loktionov, the Chief of the Air Forces Academy Lt Gen Avn F.K. Arzhenukhin, the deputy chief of the Main Artillery Directorate, Maj Gen Art G.K. Savchenko, the Chief of the Main Directorate of Long-Distance Aviation, Lt Gen Avn I.I. Proskurov, the Air Forces commander of the Moscow Military District, Lt Gen Avn P.I. Pumpur, the assistant commander of the Air Forces for training facilities, Maj Gen Avn E.G. Shakht, the Air Forces Chief of Staff Maj Gen Avn P.S. Volodin, the worker from one of the directorates of the People's Commissariat of Defense, Maj Gen Tech Trps M.M. Kayukov and others. As one can see, particularly tangible harm was done to our Air Forces with I.V. Stalin considering himself to be personally the chief.

These generals were arrested by Beriya's henchmen at various times. Thus, A.D. Loktionov was called back to Moscow in the spring of 1941 and did not return further to the district. P.V. Rychagov on 12 April 1941 was enrolled in the General Staff Academy and then arrested. On the very same day, I.I. Proskurov was removed from his position; G.M. Shtern and Ya.V. Smushkevich were arrested on 14 June 1941 and so forth. On 28 October of the same year, in the settlement of Barysh in Kuybyshev Oblast, they were executed, while P.I. Pumpur and E.G.

Shakht were eliminated in February 1942. Thus, at the very outset of the war, the army was deprived of experienced and capable commanders. Justice was restored only in the 1950s (1954-1960), when the innocent victims were posthumously rehabilitated, their military ranks were restored and decorations and title of the Hero of the Soviet Union returned. Their names are now perpetuated in the names of streets and squares.

When the Nazi invaders attacked our nation, the Soviet Army immediately felt a lack of experienced high-rank military commanders who understood the nature of modern warfare. Not all of those promoted to superior command posts in 1937-1940 met the requirements of the day. Some lacked military knowledge and others did not have combat experience. A tested weapon was also employed against them, namely the accusation of treachery and betrayal. For example, a very difficult situation arose on the Western Front with the start of the war with the enemy launching the main thrust here. Here the error of the Supreme Command made itself felt as it had considered that if the enemy were to start a war, the main sector would be the southwestern and it concentrated significantly more forces there than on the western. The commander of the front, Army Gen (since 1941) D.G. Pavlov was also not up to his position. He lost the threads of troop control, he did not understand the situation, and gave the field forces and formations unrealistic, unfeasible tasks. Of course, there were many reasons which brought about our setbacks, but I.V. Stalin, as G.K. Zhukov recalled, was "inclined to blame the Command of the Western Front and its staff for everything...."⁵ On 16 July 1941, Stalin signed the decree of the State Defense Committee [GKO] for the arrest and remanding to the military tribunal "for cowardliness defaming the rank of commander, for the inaction of authority, lack of efficiency, the breakdown of troop command, the surrendering of weapons to the enemy without a fight and unauthorized abandoning of positions"⁶ of some nine commanders and political workers, including Army Gen D.G. Pavlov, the chief of staff of the front, Maj Gen V.Ye. Klimovskikh, the front signals chief, Maj Gen Sig Trps A.T. Grigoryev, the commander of the 4th Army of the Western Front, Maj Gen A.A. Korobkov, the commander of the XLI Rifle Corps of the Northwestern Front, Maj Gen I.S. Koso-butskiy, the commander of the 60th Mountain-Rifle Division of the Southern Front, Maj Gen M.B. Salikhov, his deputy for political affairs, Reg Commissar I.G. Kurochkin, the commander of the 30th Rifle Division from the same front, Maj Gen S.G. Galaktionov, and his deputy for political affairs, Reg Commissar I.K. Yeliseyev.

Of course, the GKO decree, as terrible as it was, could not anticipate the negative events on the Soviet-German Front as these depended not only upon the command personnel. In July-August, our troops suffered a number of major defeats. A consequence of this was the Order of Headquarters No. 270 of 16 August 1941 in which

examples were given of the heroism of the Soviet troops headed by the deputy commander of the Western Front, Lt Gen I.V. Boldin, the Commissar of the VIII Mechanized

Corps of the Southwestern Front N.K. Popel and the commander of the 406th Rifle Regiment of the 124th Rifle Division of the same front, T.Ya. Novikov as well as the commander of the 3d Army of the Western Front, Lt Gen V.I. Kuznetsov and the army military council member, Army Commissar 2d Rank N.I. Biryukov. The latter led out of encirclement some 498 Red Armymen and commanders of the 3d Army and organized a breakout from the encirclement for the 108th and 64th Rifle Divisions.⁷ Along with this, instances were given of the surrendering by the commanders of the 28th Army, Lt Gen V.Ya. Kachalov, and the 12th Army, Maj Gen P.G. Ponedelin, the commander of the XIII Rifle Corps of the same army, Maj Gen N.K. Kirillov. The last two generals actually did surrender but V.Ya. Kachalov was mentioned without any grounds for this. The order stated that "individual generals have set a bad example for our troops." It was further asserted that Lt Gen V.Ya. Kachalov, "being with the staff of the army group in the encirclement, showed cowardice and surrendered to the Nazis. The staff of the Kachalov group broke out of encirclement, units of the Kachalov group also broke out of encirclement, while Lt Gen Kachalov preferred to surrender, preferred deserting to the enemy."

Neither the previous life and activities of the army commander nor his actions in the commenced war provided any grounds for such a hurried conclusion. The former chief of the army political section V.P. Tereshkin thus described him: "He was calm, restrained and attentive to his subordinates...he was strict and exacting, but also explained calmly and persuasively the tasks which he set for subordinates and just as calmly and persuasively answered all questions which arose among his subordinates.... He never showed hurry. In fighting he was an example of personal courage and disdain for danger.... He showed profound hate and disdain for the Nazi invaders. Repeatedly in my presence he belittled the leaflets which the enemy dropped from aircraft on the positions of our units, showing here that the enemy did not know the Soviet people, it did not know the nation it was attacking and that this would lead the Nazis to an inevitable defeat, regardless of their initial successes."⁸

V.Ya. Kachalov died on 4 August 1941 near the village of Starinka in Smolensk Oblast in breaking out of an encirclement. Later the same V.P. Tereshkin and the army military council member V.I. Kolesnikov reported to the Chief of the Main Political Directorate L.Z. Mekhlis that V.Ya. Kachalov had perished, in endeavoring to break out of an encirclement on a tank, and it was impossible to believe that he had surrendered. In response to this, L.Z. Mekhlis called them "political innocents" who did not understand that "Kachalov had himself not only long ago resolved to go over to the

enemy, but had even sought allies."⁹ In order to please Stalin who was endeavoring to shift his own blame for the setbacks in the summer of 1941 to the generals, he approved the story of the army commander's betrayal.

In December 1953, V.Ya. Kachalov was rehabilitated posthumously. In May 1965, he was awarded the Order of the Patriotic War 1st Degree, and on 25 September 1967, on the outskirts of the village of Starinka an obelisk was erected with the inscription: "Here on 4 August 1941, the commander of the 28th Army, Gen V.Ya. Kachalov, and his combat friends died a death of the brave."¹⁰

The 12th Army under the command of Maj Gen P.G. Ponedelin, at the beginning of August 1941, was fighting heavily in an encirclement together with the 6th Army of Lt Gen I.N. Muzychenko. On 7 August, the staff of the field force was ambushed. Gen I.G. Ponedelin, having used up all his cartridges, was knocked to the ground in hand-to-hand combat and taken prisoner. Stunned by a blow, the corps commander, Maj Gen N.K. Kirillov was also captured.

But the order from Headquarters said the following about their capturing: about Ponedelin, "he did not show the necessary tenacity and will for victory...he gave way to panic, he showed cowardice and surrendered to the enemy, deserting to the enemy"; about N.K. Kirillov—"he deserted the battlefield and surrendered to the enemy."¹¹ Obviously, such conclusions were hurried and biased. Stalin thereby removed from himself as well as from the Commander-in-Chief of the Southwestern Sector, S.M. Budennyi, any responsibility and blame for the difficult situation which the 6th and 12th Armies found themselves in.

The Nazis were quick in using the fact of the capture for propaganda purposes. The generals were photographed next to German officers and leaflets with these photographs were scattered in the positions of our units. But this was an intentional lie. P.G. Ponedelin, N.K. Kirillov as well as V.Ya. Kachalov were representatives of the best of the Red Army generals. MSU I.Kh. Bagramyan had high praise for the first: "Maj Gen Pavel Grigoryevich Ponedelin was in command of an army and was probably the best educated of our army commanders. At one time...he headed the staff of the Leningrad Military District and directed the Tactics Chair at the Military Academy imeni M.V. Frunze. A great expert in high unit tactics who had an outstanding knowledge of the questions of military art, Ponedelin had great authority in our district."¹²

If P.G. Ponedelin had wanted to betray his country, he would have done this immediately after his capture, but he remained loyal to the military oath and to the people to the end. Moreover, when the traitor Vlasov arrived at the camp in Wuhlheide where Ponedelin was being kept to recruit supporters, P.G. Ponedelin spat at him.¹³ In

going through all the torture of captivity and a concentration camp, Maj Gen P.G. Ponedelin was liberated by the Americans and turned over to the Soviet Military Mission in France.

In the first month of the war, the corps of N.K. Kirillov as part of the 12th Army was retreating while heavily engaged from the Stry River via Galich, Vinnitsa to Uman, where the combat record of its commander ended as he was captured. On 7 August 1941, N.K. Kirillov began his wanderings through the camps, including the famous Dachau. He was released from captivity by the Allies in April 1945.

From the spring of 1945, the Soviet generals returned from captivity, including P.G. Ponedelin and N.K. Kirillov, underwent so-called "State Verification." There were few who remembered them as the captured generals in no way conformed to the "Stalinist strategy of an active defense" or the outstanding victory of the "Stalinist military genius" over the enemy. On 30 December 1945, P.G. Ponedelin, N.K. Kirillov and others were arrested. The investigation lasted 5 years. By this time, the Beriya machine of repression was again picking up its all-crushing speed. The "Leningrad case" was fabricated as well as the cases of Mar Avn S.A. Khudyakov, Gen V.N. Gordov, Adms N.G. Kuznetsov, V.A. Alafuzov, L.M. Galler, G.A. Stepanov and others. The generals languishing in Lefortovo Prison were also recalled. On 25 August 1953, they were sentenced by the Military Collegium to execution. P.G. Ponedelin was accused of "in the position of commander of the 12th Army and having fallen into the encirclement of enemy troops, he did not show the required tenacity and will to victory, he fell sway to panic and on 7 August 1941, having violated his military oath, betrayed the motherland, without resistance surrendered to the Germans and in interrogation gave them information about the strength of the 12th and 6th Armies."

N.K. Kirillov was accused on the grounds that "he, as commander of the XIII Rifle Corps and having been surrounded by the enemy, betrayed the motherland, surrendering on 7 August 1941 without resistance to the Germans and during interrogation provided the Germans with secret information on the strength of the corps units."¹⁴ Clearly, the accusation would not hold water. The generals resisted until the last opportunity and had not surrendered as was already pointed out. What sort of "secret information" could it be if by this time these formations no longer existed. And why had the "traitors" Ponedelin and Kirillov returned home? This leads one to believe that they did not feel any guilt. Only on 29 February 1956 was the sentence of P.G. Ponedelin and N.K. Kirillov repealed for an absence of any crime in their actions. Both were rehabilitated posthumously.

It required gigantic efforts by the Communist Party and all the people to bring the nation out of that difficult situation which it found itself in in 1941-1942 as a

consequence of the serious setbacks on the front. And one of the factors which noticeably aggravated this situation was the repressions which devastated the ranks of the superior command personnel in 1937-1941. One must add to this also the annihilation of command personnel during the first months of the Nazi aggression. Those who were able to be released from prison on the eve and during the war joined the ranks of the fighting people. Not all of them succeeded in certifying for new general ranks as some perished while still brigade and division commanders.

The generals of 1940 suffered heavy losses in the Great Patriotic War. As a total during the war years, over 150 generals were killed, that is, one-sixth of those who received this rank in June 1940. The first months of the war made the greatest breach in the corps of generals. Already in June-December 1941, death had taken from the ranks the Commander of the Southwestern Front M.P. Kirponos, the army commanders S.D. Akimov, V.Ya. Kachalov, M.P. Petrov, P.S. Pshennikov, K.I. Rakutin, A.K. Smirnov and P.M. Filatov, corps commanders P.N. Akhlyustin, V.B. Borisov, S.I. Yeremin, S.M. Kondrusev, F.D. Rubtsov, M.G. Khatskilevich and N.M. Shestopalov, around 30 divisional commanders, including D.I. Averkin, F.F. Alyabushev, N.N. Belov, P.P. Bogaychuk, B.D. Bobrov, S.V. Verzin, N.A. Dedayev, A.I. Zelentsov, G.N. Mikushev, T.A. Mishanin, I.V. Panfilov, V.F. Sushchiy, I.Ye. Turunov and A.Ye. Fedyunin. Falling in battle along with the listed commanders were the chief of staff of the Southwestern Front V.I. Tupikov, the deputy commander of the 26th Army for rear services, I.I. Trutko, the commander of the armored and mechanized troops of the 23d Army, Maj Gen V.B. Lavrionovich, the artillery commanders T.L. Vlasov of the 16th Army and A.S. Titov of the 18th Army, the deputy commander of the Western Front for the fortified areas I.P. Mikhaylin, the chief of staff of the Orel Military District, Maj Gen A.D. Korneyev and others.¹⁵

Many generals were lost in 1942, particularly at Kharkov. These included the army commander, Lt Gen A.M. Gorodnyanskiy, the deputy commander of the Southwestern Front, Lt Gen F.Ya. Kostenko, the deputy commander of the Southwestern Front for cavalry, Maj Gen L.V. Bobkin and others. Among the superior command personnel in 1943-1945 the losses were significantly less than in the first 2 wartime years. This can be explained by the change in the ratio of forces as well as by the increased experience of the commanders and by other factors.

Streets and squares have been named after the Soviet Army generals killed in 1941-1945. Monuments have been erected to some of them and books written about them. However, far from everything has been done to perpetuate the memory of these valorous sons of the fatherland, particularly the commanders of 1941 who at the price of their lives blocked the path to the East and helped to organize the rebuff of the strong and technically equipped enemy. In the course of the unsuccessful,

debilitating engagements of 1941-1942, many commanders were taken prisoner, as a rule, when heavily wounded or with a concussion and completely helpless. Over 50 Soviet generals were captured, including the army commanders S.V. Vishnevskiy, M.F. Lukin, I.N. Muzychenko, P.G. Ponedelin and M.I. Potapov, deputy army commanders K.L. Dobroserdov, G.M. Zusanovich and A.D. Juleshov, corps commanders P.D. Artemenko, Ye. A. Yegorov, I.A. Kornilov, N.K. Kirillov, I.S. Nikitin and M.G. Snegov, division commanders Kh.N. Alaverdov, A.S. Zotov, S.Ya. Ogurtsov, I.A. Presnyakov, V.I. Prokhorov, N.I. Proshkin, N.T. Romanov, M.B. Salikhov, I.M. Skugarev, S.A. Tkachenko, Ya. I. Tonkonogov and others. The Soviet Army generals, while in enemy concentration camps and prisons, behaved in a dignified manner, they did not betray their military oath and remained loyal to their military and civil duty. As is known, the Nazis as well as the traitor of the motherland Vlasov endeavored to win many of them over to collaboration, but were completely repulsed. Conversations in the course of which vile proposals were made were held with the talented and brave general, M.I. Potapov, the former commander of the 5th Army of the Southwestern Front, Lt Gen Engr Trps, Prof, Doctor of Military Sciences D.M. Karbyshev and others. But these individuals rebuffed them, thereby setting an example of steadfastness and endurance for all the prisoners. Many of them took an active part in the underground struggle while in Nazi captivity and for this they were tortured and even executed. In 1942, at the Hammelsburg Camp they executed the leaders of the underground organization I.S. Nikitin and Kh.N. Alaverdov. In the autumn of 1943, in the Flossenbug Camp, V.I. Prokhorov was tortured and in the following year A.D. Kuleshov and S.Ye. Danilov met their tortured death. Among those executed in prison were S.A. Tkachenko and G.I. Tkhor. N.I. Proshkin died from emaciation and illness in the camp in the town of Zamostye. On 21 April 1945, the Nazis murdered the former artillery commander of the 5th Army, Maj Gen Art V.N. Sotenskiy in Wulzburg Fortress and others. These pages in the heroic life and struggle of the courageous Soviet patriots in captivity still await their researchers.

Only a few succeeded in escaping from Nazi captivity. In 1945, the Soviet troops and Allies liberated Gens S.V. Vishnevskiy, A.S. Zotov, I.A. Kornilov, N.K. Kirillov, M.F. Lukin, I.N. Muzychenko, P.G. Ponedelin, M.I. Potapov, P.R. Sysoyev, Ya.I. Tonkonogov and a number of others. New hardships awaited them in the motherland.

Only a meager handful of opportunists and traitors defamed the glorious title of a Soviet general. This included the former commander of the 2d Assault Army, Lt Gen A.A. Vlasov, the chief of the operations section on the staff of the Northwestern Front, Maj Gen F.I. Trukhin, the chief of staff of the XXI Rifle Corps, Maj Gen D.Ye. Zakutnyy and certain others. They received their punishment due in August 1946. Of the 1,056

generals and admirals, only a few were traitors. The Nazi plan for a "fifth column" in our Armed Forces collapsed completely.

The generals of 1940 withstood the harsh testing during the years of the Great Patriotic War. They formed a united nucleus of the superior command personnel around which new, young cadres formed. They can rightly be called the treasure of the Soviet Armed Forces. And if the corps of commanders had not been weakened by the repressions on the eve of and during the war, the victory would have involved fewer human and territorial losses and less damage to our country.

New marshals of the Soviet Union were promoted from the generals during the war years. G.K. Zhukov was the first to become so (18 January 1943). After him this rank was received by A.M. Vasilevskiy, L.A. Govorov, I.S. Konev, R.Ya. Malinovskiy, K.A. Meretskov, K.K. Rokossovskiy and F.I. Tolbukhin. In the postwar period, the ranks of marshal were filled out with S.S. Biryuzov, F.I. Golikov, M.V. Zakharov, A.I. Yeremenko, K.S. Moskalenko, V.D. Sokolovskiy and V.I. Chuykov.

During the years of the Great Patriotic War (January-October 1943) the military rank of marshal of the combat arms was introduced, including: aviation, artillery, armored, signals and engineer. The first marshals of the combat arms were 10 generals of the year 1940: F.A. Astakhov, M.P. Vorobyev, N.N. Voronov, S.F. Zhavoronkov, A.A. Novikov, P.S. Rybalko, F.Ya. Falaleyev, Ya.N. Fedorenko, M.N. Chistyakov and N.D. Yakovlev, and in the postwar period this rank was awarded to P.F. Zhigarev, V.I. Kazakov and S.A. Krasovskiy. P.I. Batov, N.F. Vatutin, G.K. Malandin, P.A. Kurochkin and A.V. Khrulev, who in 1940 were lieutenant generals, became army generals. This same rank was awarded to A.I. Antonov, K.N. Galitskiy, A.S. Zhadov, G.F. Zakharov, V.D. Ivanov, M.I. Kazakov, D.D. Lelyushenko and I.Ye. Petrov who in 1940 held the rank of major generals.

The generals of 1940 during the war headed major sectors of combat against the Nazi invaders. Some 32 of them commanded fronts: I.R. Apanasenko, A.M. Vasilevskiy, N.F. Vatutin, L.A. Govorov, V.N. Gordov, G.K. Zhukov, F.I. Golikov, A.I. Yeremenko, M.G. Yefremov, G.F. Zakharov, M.P. Kirponos, M.P. Kovalev, D.T. Kozlov, I.S. Konev, P.A. Kurchkin, F.I. Kuznetsov, R.Ya. Malinovskiy, I.I. Maslennikov, D.G. Pavlov, I.Ye. Petrov, M.M. Popov, M.A. Purkayev, M.A. Reyter, K.K. Rokossovskiy, D.I. Ryabyshev, P.P. Sobennikov, V.D. Sokolovskiy, F.I. Tolbukhin, I.V. Tyulenev, V.A. Frolov, Ya.T. Cherevichenko and M.S. Khozin. Some 26 generals in the war years were chiefs of staff of the various fronts: A.F. Anisov, A.I. Antonov, S.S. Biryuzov, P.I. Bodin, I.A. Bogdanov, V.R. Vashkevich, P.P. Vechnyy, D.N. Gusev, M.V. Zakharov, V.M. Zlobin, I.I. Ivanov, M.I. Kazakov, P.S. Klenov, V.Ye. Vlimovskikh, V.Ya.

Kolpakchi, A.N. Krutikov, D.N. Nikishev, B.A. Pigarevich, A.N. Pokrovskiy, F.N. Romanov, I.V. Smorodinov, A.I. Subbotin, V.I. Tupikov, Ye.G. Trostenko, M.N. Sharokhin and G.D. Shishenin. Many were deputy commanders of the fronts and chiefs of the combat arms of the fronts.

Of the generals of 1940, during the years of the last war, there were promoted over 120 army commanders, 50 deputies and chiefs of staff of the armies, 130 commanders of the rifle, mechanized, tank and air corps. A predominant portion of the generals (over 800) participated in battles and engagements of the Great Patriotic War.¹⁶

During the war years, individual generals showed conceit, complacency, backwardness, conservatism and even arbitrariness. In the historical and memoir literature such facts have been described, in particular, involving G.I. Kulik, V.N. Gordov, D.T. Kozlov and others. But a majority of the generals provided correct leadership over the troops and developed progressive tactical principles and this ultimately created superiority of Soviet military science over Nazi.

For outstanding achievements for the motherland, a number of Soviet military leaders was awarded the Order of Victory: L.A. Govorov, I.S. Konev, R.Ya. Malinovskiy, K.A. Meretskov, K.K. Rokossovskiy and F.I. Tolbukhin. G.K. Zhukov and A.M. Vasilevskiy were awarded this state decoration twice.

For skillful command of the troops, for personal bravery and self-sacrifice, many of the generals of 1940 received the high title of Hero of the Soviet Union while 44 of them received the title by the time they were submitted for the rank of general (for participation in the fighting in Spain and in China, at Lake Khasan, the Khalkhin-Gol River and in the Soviet-Finnish War). During the years of the Great Patriotic War, another 70 persons were added to them. The military service of a number of military leaders (A.M. Vasilevskiy, V.A. Glazunov, M.V. Zakharov, I.S. Konev, D.D. Lelyushenko, R.Ya. Malinovskiy, K.S. Moskalenko, A.A. Novikov, K.K. Rokossovskiy, P.S. Rybalko, T.T. Khryukin and V.I. Chuykov) was recognized with a second Gold Star. Mar G.K. Zhukov received four Gold Stars.

The military feats of the generals of the year 1940 have gone down in perpetuity in the history of our country and they comprise its heroic pages.

Footnotes

1. DRUZHBA NARODOV No 3, 1988, pp 233, 234.
2. "Velikaya Otechestvennaya voyna Sovetskogo Soyuza 1941-1945. Kratkaya istoriya" [The Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union of 1941-1945. Brief History], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1965, p 40.

3. V.F. Loboda, "Komandnyye kadry i zakonodatel'stvo o kadrakh v razvitii Vooruzhennykh Sil SSSR" [Command Personnel and Legislation About Personnel in the Development of the USSR Armed Forces], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1960, p 62.

4. IZVESTIYA, 5-14 June 1940.

5. G.K. Zhukov, "Vospominaniya i razmyshleniya" [Remembrances and Reflections], Moscow, Izd-vo APN, 2d Supplemented Edition, Vol 1, 1974, p 279.

6. TsAMO SSSR [Central Archives of the USSR Ministry of Defense], folio SibVO, inv. 33282, file 9, sheet 5.

7. Ibid., sheet 10.

8. A.I. Yeremenko, "V nachale voyny" [At the Start of the War], Moscow, Nauka, 1964, p 272.

9. Ibid., p 274.

10. KRASNAYA ZVEZDA, 26 September 1967.

11. TsAMO, folio SibVO, inv. 33282, file 9, sheet 11.

12. I.Kh. Bagramyan, "Tak nachinalas voyna" [Thus Began the War], Moscow, Voenizdat, 2d Revised Edition, 1977, p 58.

13. Ye.A. Brodskiy, "Vo imya pobedy nad fashizmom" [For the Sake of Victory Over Naziism], Moscow, Nauka, 1970, p 106.

14. NAUKA I ZHIZN No 4, 1968, pp 23, 24.

15. The persons listed received the rank of general on 4 June 1940.

16. Author's estimate.

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Two Centers of Danger

00010003e Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 10, Oct 88 (signed to press 23 Sep 88) pp 38-43

[Article, published under the heading "Documents and Materials," prepared by G.V. Kashlyak, science associate at the Central Komsomol Archives: "Two Centers of Danger"; the article is a speech given by the Commander of the Belorussian Military District, Army Cmdr 1st Rank I.P. Uborevich at a meeting of the Western Komsomol Obkom in 1936]

[Text] [Introduction] In the Central Komsomol Archives, in the personal file of the First Secretary of the Western Komsomol Obkom Z.A. Kogan (folio 1, inv. 18, file 2258), an unedited copy has been found of a speech given at one of the meetings in the Western Obkom by

the Commander of the Belorussian Military District, the prominent Soviet military leader, Army Cmdr 1st Rank I.D. Uborevich. In our view, this is of undoubted interest both in terms of its factual content as well as for its assessments of the military might of Nazi Germany and militaristic Japan as well as ideas about a future war as voiced by I.P. Uborevich.

The text of the speech is not dated. Judging from its content, it dates to the spring of 1936. The text is published here with slight corrections and abridgments. [End of Introduction]

Comrades, allow me first of all to extend to you a Red Army greeting from our divisions, corps, air and mechanized brigades, from all the troops of the Belorussian Military District. Comrades, I must disappoint you as I have been unable to prepare a major report because for 6 weeks I have been abroad, I was in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Austria, Belgium and France. I returned through Germany. Without any notes and by memory I would like to tell you in a few words how we must presently understand the acuteness of the international situation, how we must understand the military-technical aspect of the current international situation, a bit about the nature of war, how we are presently strengthening the defenses of our nation, and what we expect—the party, the government and the nation—from our Leninist Komsomol during these serious moments of the international situation and the life of our country.

Let me begin with the first. It is very easy now for any speaker, any commentator, after the speech by Comrade Stalin to assess our international situation and correctly understand the danger of the outbreak of war and the balance of forces. I would merely like to develop those places in the speech of Comrade Stalin where he says that there are two centers of military danger today: Japan and Germany, and that at present Japan is more acute, although Comrade Stalin, of course, knew that on 7 March, Hitler had broken the Locarno Treaty and which I will describe below and moved troops into an area which was considered banned under the treaty, that is, the Rhineland. Let us first discuss what is happening in the Far East. Japan is a major capitalist state, where the internal contradictions in the nation due to religion, the particular indoctrination of the Army and the particular policy are not very great. The awareness of the workers and the awareness of the poorest peasantry have not risen to the point where one could speak about an acute class struggle or a revolutionary situation, as we might infer, as was the case in Russia prior to 1905.

Japan has a large army, one of the best armies in the world, with a particularly remarkable officer personnel. There the officer and superior are almost like a father. He leaves the barracks only after the soldier has dined. There the officer teaches the soldier very tenaciously and skillfully controls them. They have very few disciplinary

infractions. Parents are also involved in the indoctrination of the soldier. For example, a very popular method is employed: a soldier arrives in the army with his father, mother, bride, brother, sister, and a ceremonial meeting is organized between the parents who brought the soldier and the commander. Here he (the new soldier) is presented with a weapon. The squadron commander stands on one side and the parents on the other, and there is the ceremonial transfer by the father of his son for 2 years in the army, for indoctrination and training.

The soldiers there are very obedient and tenacious. For this reason it can be felt that this army is the best in the world, created on skillful agitation, on the unawareness of the soldiers and on a high technical level.

Japan has a very serious Navy and it can be considered that this is the strongest in the Japanese and Chinese seas. In the Japanese and Chinese seas, America and England also have their interests, but off the shores of Japan these powers have resolved not to enter into conflicts with the Japanese Navy.

Moreover, on the continent the Japanese are involved with such a state as China which is divided and devastated by a 10-year general war and which also has a still weak Red Army and a very weak Soviet power. China has been unable to resist the highway brigand which Japanese imperialism is.

The sole force in the Far East capable of resisting the predatory policy of Japanese imperialism is ourselves with our very large army, with our large air force, with large mechanized formations and with a relatively small navy. But we also have definite difficulties. The problem is that this is an underpopulated area of our country. Communication with the Far East is difficult due to the small number of railroads, in essence, one railroad, and the route is very long. For this reason, in the event of war the delivery of freight from the center will not be such an easy matter and a modern war requires for each army a pair of railroads, some 15 trains carrying ammunition, gasoline and bread and 1.5 of a train for the rear carrying wounded. Otherwise it is impossible to conduct modern combat.

All the same our government with great determination has strengthened the Far East and we now have there a major army. Various strata of the Japanese population are concerned by the prospect of a war against us. This prospect also concerns the statesmen of this country, they are afraid of a war, as in the event of a defeat the eyes will be opened of the suppressed peasantry and the working class. For this reason the prudent portion of Japanese society looks with fear at this war. Upon the proposal of Comrade Stalin, each year we are moving both tanks, aircraft and new divisions to the Far East.

The second force is not sufficiently strong but combined with us could develop into a powerful one. This is the national movement in China, that is, the resistance to

the rapacious enslavement by the Japanese, this is the resistance of the partisans in the hills of Manchuria. At present in Manchuria, there is no rebel movement but it was strong and bloody. We know how the 19th Army during the war resisted in Shanghai. At present, an internecine struggle has begun inside China. The students, intelligentsia and workers are acting separately, but there still is a force resisting the advance of Japan into China. The communists in a whole series of groupings are reaching terms on an united national front against Japan. And the Japanese militarists know that this national movement in China, if in the event of war we provide it with technical and military aid, will grow into a mighty force and for this reason you should note what policy was proclaimed by Hirota in coming into power. He said: "Japan requires a positive foreign policy," that is, it will continue to seize the continent even more intensely.

At present, the numerically increased Japanese Army, particularly over the last 3 years, has been strongly armed and has increased its air power.

The Japanese militarist literally deals with the government like a good cook deals with game or like a chef. He gets up in the morning at 0500 hours, wakens the soldiers, reports to the Prime Minister's offices and murders almost with impunity. This group is very strong in the army and it is demanding a strong, militant government. And it resorts to such demagoguery as let us go and beat up the bribe takers, the capitalists and financiers, the plunderers who do not give the army the appropriate funds. And the soldiers willingly follow them.

What is meant by the words of Comrade Stalin that if Japan acts against Mongolia, we, without fail, will help (I am using my own words), that is, we will intervene in this conflict because further Japanese aggressive actions cannot be tolerated. The first stage in the plunderous policy of the samurai was the capture of Manchuria, the construction of a railroad, airfields, the exploitation of mineral wealth (iron and coal) and so forth. The second stage which we are endeavoring to avoid is the military seizure of the KVZhD [Chinese East Railroad], and the third stage is the capture of Middle China which is particularly rich in ore, coking coal, and cotton is raised there. The weak point of Japan is that it does not have its own cotton. There is an enormous textile industry which employs literally hundreds of thousands of people but cotton is shipped in. They want to capture Middle China for this, and even now they are approaching Mongolia, that is, they are directly approaching Lake Baykal and Irkutsk, and for this reason quite correctly we can no longer resist Japan's actions and should show that we will fight very hard.

Incidentally, I should tell you that recently there was a small testing of forces. It was a very frosty day in the month of February (I will not give the date). A detachment of Japanese a thousand men strong with armored

vehicles and motor vehicles attacked a Mongolian outpost. The Mongols pulled back a little. Coming to the aid of the outpost were two ground attack planes from our aviation. It must be said that each ground attack plane had four machine guns and each machine gun could get off 600 rounds. Some 600 rounds multiplied by eight machine guns is 2,400 rounds. These two ground attack planes at a low altitude flew over the Japanese column and as a result the Japanese column retreated, losing 350 men killed and wounded.

This example shows what decisive people can do with excellent equipment in their hands (and we should also add that this was with 45 degrees of frost). The remaining detachment suffered and froze and several-score Japanese literally were frozen alive, but this did not stop them. You and I, comrades, should expect a war in the Far East at any moment. But Tokyo knows and everywhere it should be known that our government in the Far East will take a maximum of measures to encounter a Japanese attack in the most worthy manner.

Now let us examine the situation in the West. Over the last 3 years, from our viewpoint, the international situation has changed there.... Previously, when we also spoke about a military danger deriving from the West, Germany was a democratic republic with a group of Social Democrats and rightists in power and the country was disarmed. We worked together with this Germany. Germany was an enormous blank spot on the strategic air routes of Europe and which favored us as the closest military opponents preparing for war against us could not cross it. Poland, Romania, Finland and Estonia could be these opponents, French divisions could appear as an assault force, the English fleet might appear but all the same the closest land opponent was weak and for this reason...the development rates of our state, our pie and the danger of an attack on us by such states as Poland and Romania is already diminishing for us. The European situation has changed with the arrival of Naziism and Hitler, particularly in the last 3 years. There has been a regrouping of forces in Europe. Hitler is very strongly using the German national feeling wounded by the defeat of Germany in World War I and the Versailles Treaty which was imposed on Germany by force. Generally, it must be said that Hitler with his group of followers are clever men. They are using the contradictions between England and France and have put Poland under their influence.

Within the country, Hitler is carrying out a policy directed against the peasantry and to a significant degree against a portion of the workers, but he stands for two things: for industrial and financial capital as well as for an expansion of production. He has provided many unemployed with work and has created a large army (up to 900,000 men) and aviation. German industry provided a 10 percent increase in output in 1934 and the same in 1935. All the same, the country has around 2.5-3 million unemployed during the winter months. He is applying pressure to the countryside, to a portion of the

worker groups as well as to financial capital. And at present it can be concluded that Hitler in Germany is strongly entrenched. The policy of repression conducted by him against the Communist Party has been felt in the activeness of the worker movement which has been decapitated. And the mass elimination of revolutionary elements was carried out by him in a single night.... For this reason, you and I should look at the situation in the West in the following manner: inevitably this year or the next or in 2 or 3 years, we will encounter a German Naziism which can exist economically and politically only for a short time, only on the basis of those injections and military measures and so forth. The Nazis cannot help but start a war. Without a war they cannot exist long. This is a dying form and it can live 2 or 3 years.

What are our relations with France? I was in Paris precisely in the month of February when their Chamber of Deputies was discussing the Franco-Soviet Treaty. I should tell you that the French political forces, the French public and the statesmen show a varying attitude toward this treaty. Some of them hate us strongly and argued for their position by saying that the Bolsheviks cannot be trusted, they canceled their debts, they are making revolution in France and destroying the army. Tukhachevskiy and I were visited by Mar Petain, an authoritative man, terribly mercurial, and previously he was a minister but is now retired. All the ministers call on him. In our meeting he stated: "Listen, can't you influence the communists so that they do not destroy our army and our nation." It had to be explained to the old man in great detail and employing certain Marxist theses, as Comrade Stalin said, that if you are firmly seated in the saddle, you have nothing to fear and we do not intend to export a communist revolution. Comrade Tukhachevskiy told him that if we had to destroy some army this would be first of all the German Army....

Then Petain began to be interested in our reserves, pilots and so forth. We informed him that we have great reserves, we described construction and so forth. He was very content. But I want to point out to you the following. When the treaty was being discussed, we were informed that if you stop corrupting our army we will favor you and if you do not stop we will oppose you. The rightists have done everything to prevent the signing of a treaty with us and they have used the argument here that Hitler has repeatedly offered a peace, good relations with France and that he intended to attack the Soviet Union. From this it can be concluded that Hitler is still frightened of us but is preparing for war. His action against the Locarno Treaty and his army in the Rhineland are a dash of cold water on uncautious minds and they should realize that if we want to check the danger of war in Europe, then we must not allow Germany to move. Hitler says that he intends to act against the Soviet Union but in reality he is afraid to move against us because we are a strong force. Together with such a state as France, we can play a major role in the affairs of Europe. For this reason we must not allow a war to start in Europe. A very great deal depends upon the position of our two countries.

I should say that Comrade Tukhachevskiy and I became acquainted with the French Army and the defense plants. France has a fine army and the aircraft are good.

We know ourselves and we will not exaggerate, but also let us not show excessive humility. These two forces should play a major role in Europe. At present, we need to restrain German Naziism and at the necessary moment take all measures for a victorious struggle.

Hitler has proposed to France that the treaty be broken and in the future promises not to touch France for 25 years, but France is experienced and knows how Germany violated the treaty and how the Germans have encroached on French lands. I was at French cemeteries where one had 25,000 graves and the other 35,000 and it must be said that France knows how to maintain the monuments of war. There, there are mothers who even now go to these cemeteries in mourning. France knows what a German action means. And they scarcely believe this gesture by Hitler that he will guarantee nonaggression for 25 years. For this reason France is rising to struggle against a war and is doing so more seriously than in February.

The position of England. England is in a very difficult situation and has its own problems for today, namely Abyssinia. It wishes to check the policy of Italian conquests in Africa. And in this policy England has very great need of French help. And France has helped. For this reason England now finds it very difficult to refuse France in taking measures against Germany. At present, they are meeting in Paris on this question. Before today's speech I phoned Moscow and wanted to know whether there was any information on the results of the meeting. But regardless of this, it is possible, without making a political error, to say that in Geneva, at the League of Nations, on the 13th, Germany, having violated the Locarno Treaty, lost a great deal for everyone was thinking that Germany was preparing solely for a war against the Soviet Union and now they must understand that Germany is moving toward the Rhine and the Danube. England will support France. France will seek economic sanctions. I feel that the English will scarcely support this. Here on this question, Mussolini will gain a great deal because Italy will demand that France was helping him and lessened the pressure in Africa. We have the moral condemnation of the Germans and certain economic measures against Germany can also be carried out. A war will scarcely start today but we must increase our vigilance. What must we do in order to increase the nation's economy to a new level and strengthen the army? We carried out the annual plan last year. While last year we cast 17,000 tons of metal a day, at present we have 42,000-44,000 tons or more than double. During the year 1935, our state, in having many needs, significantly increased its army. We had 960,000 and created an additional army of almost 400,000 in a year. This is more than the entire Polish Army. Aviation has grown as well as the tanks. These measures, of course, will be

continued in 1936. In the existing situation in 1936 we will be forced to increase the size of the army by more than 340,000. And we will continue this increase.

What will a war in the West involve for us, what must be feared and for what must we be ready? This, I think, will be the sense of the military work which we conduct in the Komsomol. Of course, here it is difficult to open the curtains of a future war with the human mind and this could scarcely be done with the mind of a nonscientist and nonphilosopher. But there are definite facts. In a future war, the air force will play a major role. Recently, a book was published in Germany which I looked through and which contains very eloquent figures. And the speaker of the Komsomol Central Committee should know them. In addition to the pilots which were in the army several months ago and in the sports society there were 7,000 pilots, they have set the goal of doubling this figure in 1936. Generally, the number of pilots can be reckoned at 36,000-40,000. Aviation in the future will be such a mighty force that in military terms it will not be possible to seriously defend Smolensk and Minsk. It would be impossible to have a number of fighters or antiaircraft guns which could block along the entire horizon a detachment of high-speed bombers.

For this reason, to protect a large city against aviation will be a major task, almost insoluble. And only with moral strength is it possible to find the force to endure this hardship. Of course, we must also create an air force.

In a future war, we must have an air force that is several times stronger than the enemy air force and the parts of the pilots must be bolder and more steadfast than those of the enemy. It is not so difficult to protect a person, this is possible, but, unfortunately, it is very difficult to protect livestock and animals. There are gases which can infect planted areas and killed livestock...that is, to cause great harm to the frontline zone. One must pay proper due to the Germans on the questions of motorization. They hold first place. They have very many motor vehicles. Good highways are being built. The roads in France and even in Austria are good in comparison with ours. Ours are a disgrace. The crop there is 25-30 quintals per hectare. In France...they obtain 22 quintals from the fields. The peasant huts are brick and stone, the roofs are covered with tile and each peasant courtyard and around the courtyard are paved and the livestock are good and strong. I would say that the people there are literate and cultured. Although we call their culture bourgeois, I feel that it is not a bad thing to know mathematics, geography and natural sciences well. In an apartment they have hot water, a clean bathtub, they can wash, shave and can launder their linen—this is essential....

I feel that in a future war along with motorization, culture will play an extremely important role. There must be literacy, elementary mathematical literacy,

because only this will provide us with the ability to study the equipment well and handle it intelligently. In a future war, equipment will play a crucial role.

Our youth is remarkable and it must be helped in mastering the specialties of a pilot, parachutist and so forth. A man should be courageous. In Scandinavia the youth is indoctrinated in a spirit of fearlessness so that a man is not a coward and not agitated, he does not lose spirit and does not panic for an instant. Possibly a person is considered courageous but now, for example, if things go bad for him he begins to say: "The devil knows what sort of leaders these are," and he is already in a bad mood. Or, for example, the enemy has broken through and he also begins to speak about the leadership, his mood declines and so forth. There are indications that a person may be externally courageous but in fact such details show a lack of courage and steadfastness.

We are doing a very great deal in the army to indoctrinate our Red Armymen as courageous. Courage is the presence in a man of such a quality, for example, of firmness of a given word. Once one's word has been given it means that the word must be kept and one must not fear difficulties. We should strengthen combat friendship. The more we swear in life, the more we speak poorly of one another. We are still a little concerned for one another, there is a great deal of selfishness, there is little combat friendship and this in a war is a decisive [force]. I had the following thing happen: in a detachment a soldier froze to death. I can assume that possibly the commander was not to blame, but where were the other comrades who could allow a very good man who was physically weak to freeze?

Comrades, this shows the absence of concern for others. We can all be courageous and steadfast and conscientious but if we, comrades, are illiterate and uncultured this will be bad.... Each induction of soldiers from the countryside brings 35 percent illiterate to the barracks. And these illiterates are in essence people who are completely illiterate, they are people who can barely write their name and read two pages in an hour. These are people who do not know who Stalin is or who Hitler is, where is the West and where the East or what socialism is. In the army this is enormous trouble for us and we teach literacy for months. We have engineers and technicians who do not know what dressing to eat with thermodynamics and they do not know fractions because in secondary school they do the devil knows what.

The first thing is to study as one should.

Here they have described how the load on our youth has increased. It has increased but little. If you look at the German youth, at the German troops, we are very weak and puny in comparison. Why? Because we have done little to develop sports, and there is no serious hygiene and these would help to develop the organism. Many of

us smoke and this has a lethal effect on the organism and there is sexual excess which produces weak soldiers. Health must be improved by sports and good hygiene.

Let me end on this.

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Prague and Military Conspiracy Case

00010003f Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY
ZHURNAL in Russian No 10, Oct 88 (signed to press
23 Sep 88) pp 44-53

[Article, published under the heading "Viewpoints, Judgments, Versions," by I. Pfaff: "Prague and the Military Conspiracy Case"]

[Text] [Introduction] In 1937, M.N. Tukhachevskiy, upon orders of Stalin, was arrested and sentenced to be executed. This was the beginning of the unbridled tyranny and repression against the officer personnel of the Red Army. Upon Stalin's instructions, subsequently the wife of Mar Tukhachevskiy, Nina Yevgenyevna, and his brothers, Aleksandr and Nikolay, were eliminated. Three sisters were exiled to camps. The daughter was still a juvenile but when she attained her majority she was also arrested. The mother and sister, Sofia, died in exile.

People continue to ask how could it happen that during the period of the threat of Nazi aggression, our finest military personnel were eliminated?

Let us recall to the reader how at the 22d CPSU Congress, N.S. Khrushchev stated that the leadership of Nazi Germany through their intelligence service fed Stalin with fabricated documents which "proved" the conspiracy headed by Mar Tukhachevskiy and other prominent military leaders as well as their collaboration with the Wehrmacht. The preparation of the dossier with "authentic" documents involved the highest representatives of Nazi Germany. Hitler and Heydrich, in knowing Stalin's cruelty, his anxiety and suspicion, felt that they had an opportunity to decapitate the Red Army. Their plan was simple: if Stalin could be made to suspect the higher officers of conspiracy, then he should seek out the proof of their treason. And if this proof did not exist then it had to be created.

This "proof"—supposedly secret documents—was delivered to the Czechoslovak President Benes and he, evidently being guided by good intentions, forwarded this to Stalin.

In the 1950s and 1960s, information on the "Tukhachevskiy case" appeared repeatedly in the press. This was recalled in their memoirs by Benes and Winston Churchill as well as the leading co-workers of Himmler's secret security service Wilhelm Hettl (Walter Hagen) and Walter Schellenberg. But this intrigue was not as simple as stated by the designated persons.

In the aims of a more complete and thorough elucidation of the circumstances to the "Tukhachevskiy case," we are publishing the materials of the West German historian Iwan Pfaff who has described the version rather widespread in the West. The author extensively uses in his work the memoirs of state, political and military figures, archival materials, state and party documents. [End of Introduction]

It is tragic that it was precisely Benes who just 2 years before this had concluded a treaty of mutual aid with the Soviet Union and had consistently endeavored to carry out in Czechoslovak foreign policy practices the provisions of the treaty concluded with Moscow, paradoxically to a significant degree aided the affair of the Tukhachevskiy "conspiracy" and the subsequent liquidation of a larger portion of the Red Army officer corps. He believed in the Tukhachevskiy "conspiracy" and personally informed Stalin of this. The widespread notion of how Benes was tricked by the Nazi forgeries and particularly that the forgeries followed the route of Hitler—Heydrich—the German agent in Prague—Benes, in light of the Czechoslovak diplomatic documents has turned out to be erroneous.¹ It merely remains to be asked: was not the description of this account by Walter Schellenberg an intentional and purposeful distortion if not a falsification of events. Benes himself writes in his postwar memoirs that he knew about the conspiratorial plans of Tukhachevskiy from a talk between the Czechoslovak ambassador in Berlin, Mastny, and Count Trautmansdorf, one of the two emissaries to the German-Czechoslovak secret talks at the end of 1936.² The Benes assertion for now has not been given particular significance, particularly in line with the fact that Trautmansdorf after the death of Benes, indignantly repudiated this version.³

Of course, it is not a pure fabrication (as is asserted by Benes) that at one time there was a direct contact between of Heydrich's agents and the intelligence service of the Prague General Staff or even with a personal confidant of Benes. Such a route was chosen by the German side for transmitting to Prague those falsifications by which they planned to compromise the Soviet generals. Only recently have we learned that the German journalist, Dr Karl Wittig, an agent of the German security service which employed him for disinformation, maintained contact with the intelligence service of the Czechoslovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs [MFA]. As a result of this, the Intelligence Service of the Czechoslovak MFA was under the control of the German Security Service. Although ultimately the Nazi forgeries were secretly presented to the Czechoslovak president who, for unknown reasons, preferred to have greater trust in the intelligence service of the MFA than the significantly more efficient and experienced intelligence service of the General Staff, quite obviously precisely by Wittig,⁴ however, a key role in the furthering of the Nazi intrigue was played by Count Trautmansdorf. Trautmansdorf who had established contact with Mastny, even at the end of August 1936, and in November and December 1936 was

holding secret talks with Benes in Prague, on 9 February 1937, as if by accident, informed Mastny that Hitler had unexpectedly and by surprise broken off the exploratory talks in Prague, since he had received information from the USSR on the preparations to remove Stalin and establish a military dictatorship there: "He added that the true reason for the indecisiveness of the chancellor must be sought in the assumption in accord with which (according to certain evidence received by him) that in Russia, in all probability, in the near future there would be a surprise coup, the removal of Stalin and Lityinov and the instituting of a military dictatorship. If this occurs, the chancellor would change his position vis-a-vis Russia. He would be ready simultaneously to settle scores with Western and Eastern Europe, of course, again only by concluding bilateral treaties. I set out for Count Trautmansdorf an analysis of the situation in Russia as it seemed to us, and at the same time expressed serious doubts that a coup was in the offing in the aim of establishing a military dictatorship as well as eliminating Stalin."⁵

Mastny's doubts relative to the German assessment were obviously less than his concern. For otherwise he scarcely would have left immediately for Prague in order on 11 February to submit a detailed message on this to the Minister of Foreign Affairs Krofta, as well as to Benes, and on 13 February again have a 2-hour talk with Benes (there are no notes on these personal talks of Mastny). To what degree it is a question here of purposeful Nazi disinformation in the interests of which the German-Czechoslovak talks were to serve as a deftly prepared base for the secret transfer of the forgeries can be seen from the German sources. On the one hand, Neurath just 2 days after the announcement by Mastny stated: "It would be something different if things in Russia continued to develop in the direction of absolute despotism, relying on the military. In this instance we, of course, must not miss a moment to again intervene in the affairs of Russia."⁶ This statement, obviously more than confirmed the accuracy of Mastny's information but, on the other hand, the German ambassador in Moscow, who was not initiated into the intrigue and for this reason was more objective, perceived on 29 January the official Soviet charges on the links of the "Trotskyites" (Radek, Pyatakov and their associates) indicted in January with Berlin as a dubious maneuver aimed at morally discrediting the anti-Stalinist opposition in the eyes of the Soviet public.

Just a day before the comment of Trautmansdorf addressed to Mastny, Schullenburg condemned rumors of a conspiracy in the superior Red Army Command as purely fabricated conclusions from previously held trials. He condemned these rumors on the grounds that no indications were noted of tension in the relations between Stalin and Tukhachevskiy as well as the other generals.⁷ Even a month after Mastny's "discovery" even the Imperial War Ministry on the grounds of intelligence data categorically stated that neither Tukhachevskiy nor the other Soviet generals had maintained

any ties with the "Trotskyite opposition" and were not even slightly thinking of a military putsch against Stalin.⁸

But Benes and the Czechoslovak diplomats accepted Trautmansdorf's announcement without any doubts. Not only for the reason that simultaneously with Mastny's information Prague received reports from Moscow according to which a number of leading Soviet political figures and even Tukhachevskiy himself had been arrested but this, however, could not be verified.⁹ But to an even greater degree because the pro-German sympathies shown by Tukhachevskiy in the autumn of 1935, in the notions of Prague, were grounds for and the subject of previous reports which had disconcerted Czechoslovak diplomacy and which now supposedly were confirmed by the German version and clearly gained another reason for recognizing their authenticity. Thus, the Czechoslovak MFA in April 1936 from the White emigres living in the Czechoslovak capital confidentially learned of the supposedly existing plans of the Soviet army leadership aimed against Stalin's circle and after the overthrow of Stalin the apparent conspirators intended supposedly to establish friendly relations with Berlin and abandon the obligations of the Soviet Union under the Treaty on Mutual Aid.¹⁰ At the beginning of October 1936, the Prague police arrested suspicious Gestapo agents who were preparing to steal written documents of the Soviet military attache in Prague and during their interrogation confirmed that the military attache was maintaining contact with German counterintelligence.¹¹ Although such evidence, due to their dubious origin, was viewed with caution in Prague,¹² it clearly did leave definite tracks. This is all the more probable since at the end of October 1936 messages from the Czechoslovak missions were received from Warsaw and Berlin showing the German efforts to reach agreement with the Soviet Union as well as the pro-Soviet sympathies in the ranks of the representatives of the old Reichswehr. The words of Mastny on Hitler's "interest to catapult us from ties with Russia" were then interpreted differently by Prague and now 3 months later it recalled this as information which could point to intrigues by Berlin.¹³ Not long before the Christmas holidays of 1936, the Czechoslovak MFA from the White Guard emigre Roman Smal-Stockig, a former Ukrainian ambassador to Berlin who was now living in Warsaw, received information which justifiably caused Benes to fear a new Rapallo (as a consequence of news on the pending change in German policy vis-a-vis the Soviet Union). The message contained detailed information on the Nazi plan, even before concluding a treaty with Moscow, using subversive actions to evoke a political coup in the Soviet Union with the broad involvement of the Trotskyites as well as a number of ambitious superior commanders of the Red Army.¹⁴

If this information due to a "strange confluence of circumstances" fell into the hands of the Czechoslovak foreign policy leadership precisely at a time when Benes was again receiving Count Trautmansdorf, then it is a

matter of a too suspicious coincidence of time. This puts the given message into the world of Nazi intrigues. The telegrams from the Czechoslovak ambassador in Moscow, Pavlu, of January 1937 evidently intensified the assumption in Prague that after the sentencing of the "Trotskyites" (Radek, Pyatakov and their associates) and their elimination from Soviet policy, the alternative of a rapprochement with Germany in the USSR had disappeared. Benes was panic-struck by such an alternative and this had also been pointed to by the ambassador in Berlin 2 months previously, at the end of November 1936.¹⁵ A positive assessment of the trial, according to the data of the ambassador to Moscow¹⁶ should all the more persuade Benes of the presence of the Tukhachevskiy conspiracy and the authenticity of the false version created by Mastny, since Benes during the first days of April 1937 in the diplomatic mail found new rumors about the desire of the Soviet Union to reach an agreement with Berlin.¹⁷ This, as it seemed then, was confirmed also by other messages of a general nature from the Czechoslovak mission in Moscow.¹⁸ The government circles of Prague showed evermore concern over the possible establishing of a military dictatorship in Moscow. The representatives of other countries friendly to Germany and accredited to Prague were also swept up in such fears²⁰, particularly when the French ambassador in Moscow Coulondre at the same time drew attention to the supposedly existing pro-German tendencies in Tukhachevskiy and Voroshilov and named them as possible potential leaders of a coup in Soviet policy.²¹ In mid-April 1937, Coulondre went even further when he confidentially informed the French ambassador in Berlin that he had received from "official" German representatives information that, in their opinion, Stalin, Litvinov, Dimitrov and political leaders of Jewish nationality were to disappear and in the place of this there should arise a national Russia based on military dictatorship which would be ready to collaborate with Germany.²²

The bouquet of circumstantial evidence and messages increased to such a degree that it concealed the false pictures and ascribed to the thoughts of the political figures in Prague the appearance of reliability which withstood even any critical examination. The striking contradiction between the extended preparations and the seemingly very promising course of the talks of the German emissaries with Benes and their sudden breaking off (the breaking off of the talks was announced in line with a message on the pending coup in the Soviet Union and explained by this), as it appears, makes it possible to consider the talks initiated by Berlin with Prague a clever chess move and a trap which pursued exclusively just two things: on the one hand, to feed Benes the "evidence" against Tukhachevskiy and, on the other, to weaken the Soviet Army and artificially cause mistrust toward Moscow on behalf of the governments of Prague and Paris.²³

Thus, we have defined, at last, the development of events on the German side and it would be wise to turn directly to the Nazi intrigue. It is hard to determine whether its

author was actually the White Guard Gen Skoblin in Paris who was simultaneously an agent of the SD [Security Service] and the NKVD [People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs] and whom Heydrich with his "information" led to the notion of initiating an intrigue against Tukhachevskiy²⁴ or was this plan assignable to Heydrich exclusively. The White Guard origin of certain previous messages from Paris on the supposedly occurring preparations for conspiracy among the Soviet generals could show that the information on the involvement of Skoblin was not taken out of the air. However it may be, it seems reliable that Heydrich approximately in mid-December 1936 reported to Hitler on his plan to put into action the forged documents which should "confirm" the existence of seeming ties between Tukhachevskiy and the German General Staff. Hitler supposedly approved this plan.²⁵ In the beginning of 1937, Schellenberg who was the confidant of Heydrich received orders to work out research on the history of relations between the Red Army and the Reichswehr. After submitting this research, Heydrich supposedly issued orders to manufacture the corresponding forged documents.²⁶ A majority of authors assumes that Heydrich requested that Canaris submit the evidence of counterintelligence on relations between the two armies during the period of 1926-1932 as the basis for working out the forged documents. However, Canaris refused to do this.²⁷ Schellenberg as well as Hagen describe a particularly fantastic sounding story half detective and half cowboy according to which Heydrich seized those documents which he had been unsuccessfully seeking from Canaris with the aid of SS subunits which made a nighttime raid on the counterintelligence archives (the archives were plundered and then burned).²⁸ To that degree it is impossible to clarify the question of how and then when the documents were manufactured,²⁹ what they actually contained and whether Soviet "specialists" from the very outset were actually kept informed of these matters or even participated in the making of the forgeries. That the entire intrigue was inspired by the NKVD and that Heydrich and his personnel merely carried out an intermediary and auxiliary role is an enticing theory,³⁰ however it runs contrary both to political logic and to the prestige concerns of both secret services. If Stalin had actually wanted to eliminate Tukhachevskiy primarily by himself he would not have needed to choose such a complicated and risky round-about. It would be significantly simpler to find material for accusing Tukhachevskiy, that is, directly in the Soviet Union with the aid of the NKVD and here Stalin could have kept the entire course of the case under his exclusive supervision.³¹ On the contrary, one can scarcely ascribe to Heydrich and the SD the subordinate role of simple henchmen, for it is impossible to assume that they would have been satisfied by the belittling status of simple assistants and providers for the other, rival service.

If the thesis of the Soviet origin of the intrigues against Tukhachevskiy is viewed with exceptional critical restraint, then it is possible to consider as unreliable the information found in the literature on the dates and ways

by which the false documents reached Moscow. That they were made only in April 1937 in Berlin, and only at the beginning of May reported and only in mid-May reached the hands of the representatives of the Soviet Union³² is an assertion which does not stand up to criticism, as otherwise Tukhachevskiy could not have been removed from his positions on 11 May, without mentioning the Czechoslovak documents which show that the forgeries were probably to be ready before the end of March. Although one cannot completely exclude that the SS Gen Bernes with "documents was sent incognito into Czechoslovakia," as all have asserted about this, in order to there establish contact with a confidant of Benes,³³ who else could this have been but the above-mentioned Wittig whom the SD used for penetrating the intelligence service of the Czechoslovak MFA and for disinforming it. On the contrary, the version can be completely excluded according to which Heydrich's people supposedly established contact with the Soviet embassy in Berlin in order directly to offer to the Soviet Union "material" against Tukhachevskiy and that later Stalin's agent was sent from Moscow to Berlin in order to purchase these documents from the Germans for 3 million gold rubles.³⁴ Both the Soviet as well as the Czechoslovak documents have shown with equal completeness that precisely Benes sent Stalin the secretly offered "documents," having received them directly from the Reich and although Wittig played an important intermediary role in this, he was not, however, the sole source.

Footnotes

1. Walter Schellenberg, "Memoirs," Cologne, 1959, pp 48-51.
2. Edward Benes, "Memoirs," Prague, 1947, p 34 et seq.; "Subjects of a New Conflict," in the collection "The Nation," Vol 166, No 23, 19 June 1948, pp 681-684.
3. FRANKFURTER ALGEMEINE ZEITUNG, 15 January 1952.
4. Ladislav Bitman, "The Loops of Espionage," Toronto, 1981, pp 119 et seq. The author who was until 1968 a major in the Czechoslovak Intelligence Service learned about this contact, on the one hand, from the archives of the CSSR MFA and, on the other, and chiefly, from information of the GDR Intelligence Service under whose orders Wittig was arrested in 1961 as a double agent. Wittig (1901-1980) in 1956 was the main witness for the charges against Otto John; in 1962, in the capital of the GDR, Berlin, he was sentenced to 15 years imprisonment.
5. "Mastny Note," Berlin, 9 February 1937. "Mastny Materials. Archives of the Prague National Museum" (printed here as Appendix 1). This version is confirmed in the coinciding later note by the American ambassador in Moscow who also heard German information as a source; G.E. Davies, "As the U.S. Ambassador in

Moscow," Zurich, 1943, p 8; "Note of 16 January 1937. Statement by Churchill," "World War II," Vol 6, Bern, 1954, p 117. The fact that Benes was informed on the German-Soviet conspiratorial contact conducted through the Soviet mission in Prague by the Czechoslovak Secret Service is to the highest degree unreliable and shows the distortion of the truth by Churchill in comparison with the recollections of Benes written after his conversation with Churchill in Marrakesh.

6. "Letter of Neurath to Schacht." Berlin, 11 February 1937, in the book: J.V. Brugel, "Stalin and Hitler. Pact Against Europe," Vienna, 1973, No 8, p 41. Wacław Kral has endeavored to find the origin of the intrigue in the Ribbentrop Bureau ("Czechoslovak-Soviet Alliance in European Policy in 1935-1939," Prague, 1970, p 208). From this he concludes that an attempt was made to create the impression that the NSDAP by its action had tried to eliminate its competitor in foreign policy, that is, the office on Wilhelmstrasse. At that time, the transmitting of documents on the supposed contacts of Tukhachevskiy with the German General Staff to Prague could not be presented as a Nazi provocation but would be perceived as logical consequence of the conflicts which according to the Czechoslovak diplomatic documents were being played out in Berlin supposedly over the orientation of German foreign policy.

7. "Messages from Schullenburg to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from Moscow of 29 January, 6 February and 8 February 1937."

8. "Message of Gen Stulpnagel to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Berlin, 11 March 1937."

9. "Reports of Pavlu to Krofta From Moscow of 10 and 11 February. Moscow, 1937, Nos 11 and 12," Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Prague.

10. "Note in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Prague, 30 April 1937, II/632/36, No 58266," Archives of Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Prague. On 12 August 1936, Goring stated to the Polish deputy minister of foreign affairs that Tukhachevskiy, when he was on his way back from London in February 1936 had stopped in Berlin and had endeavored to meet with Hitler and the superior Wehrmacht Command (Jan Sembek, "Almanac for 1933-1939," Paris, 1952, p 262). Goring was obviously hoping that his story would reach the French diplomatic and intelligence circles and there intensify the mistrust for the Red Army and particularly in terms of its reliability.

11. "Message of the Presidium of the Policy Directorate of Prague to the Presidium of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Prague, 7 October 1936," File 1208, No 225/1208, RMU, State Central Archives in Prague.

12. That Benes supposedly knew of the charges against Tukhachevskiy even in the autumn of 1936 from the White Guard Information Bureau (information was forwarded to the bureau by Skoblin) in Geneva must be rejected as a fantasy of an already unreliable author (Viktor Aleksandrov, "The Marshal Stood in the Path," Bonn, 1962, pp 141-147).

13. "Message of Slavik to Krofta From Warsaw on 21 October 1936, Warsaw, 1936, No 72"; "Message From Mastny to Krofta From Berlin on 30 October 1936, Berlin, 1936, No 91" (both are in the Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Prague).

14. "The main task of Germany is at present to demoralize the USSR, to cause an internal coup there, to eliminate the communist government and put in power a national government which would conclude an alliance with Germany. The implementation of the German plan will be prepared for in the USSR by gestapo forces and it should involve in its actions not only the Trotskyites but also other communist forces, particularly in the army. The coup itself should be carried out by the Red Army.... The coup should be proclaimed under a slogan of fighting against communism, against the flooding of the nation by internationalists and in the name of a national Russia. Stalin is to be rebuked for his non-Russian origins." "Note of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Prague, 16 December 1936. III/632/36, No 168556," Archives of Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Prague.

15. "A loud anti-Soviet campaign of Nazi propaganda could not influence the belief in Soviet reliability, since in German policy there still is a second line which is based on East against West." "Message From Mastny to Krofta From Berlin, 23 November 1936, Berlin, 1936, No 98," Archives of Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Prague.

16. "Messages From Pavlu to Krofta From Moscow, 15 and 31 January 1937, No 8 and No 12," Archives of Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Prague.

17. "Message From Pavlu to Krofta From Moscow of 7 April 1937. Moscow, 1937, No 24"; "Message From Slavik to Krofta From Warsaw of 8 April 1937. Warsaw, 1937, No 30" (both are in the Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Prague).

18. [Not in text]

19. "Message From Pavlu to Krofta From Moscow of 16 April 1937. Moscow, 1937, II/2, No 52532," Archives of Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Prague.

20. "Message From Hungarian Ambassador Wettstein to Budapest From Prague of 18 April 1937," "Irálok Magyarorszag Kulpolitikaghoz," Budapest, Vol II, 1964, p 394.

21. "Message From Osusky to Krofta From Paris of 17 April 1937, Order 1937, No 3123," Archives of Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Prague.

22. "Message From Phipps to English Foreign Office From Berlin of 13 April 1937," British Foreign Office, 371, T.21095, Document No 2061, PRO, London.

23. The first to point to this possibility was Kamil Krofta, K. Krofta, "From the Times of Our First Republic," Prague, 1939, p 125.

24. V.G. Krivitskiy, "Ya byl na sluzhbe u Stalina" [I Was in Stalin's Service], Amsterdam, 1940, p 258 et seq.; Walter Hagen, "Secret Front," Linz-Vienna, 1950, p 56; W. Shellenberg, op. cit., p 198; George Bailey, "The Conspiracy Against Russia," Munich, 1961, p 198; W. Strobing, "The Attempt Against Prague," Landshut, 1977, p 245.

25. Walter Hagen, op. cit., p 57; W. Shellenberg, op. cit., p 49; W. Strobing, op. cit., p 246.

26. W. Shellenberg, op. cit., p 28 et seq.; John Ericson, "The Higher Military Command of the Soviet Union. Military-Political History 1918-1941," London, 1962, p 435.

27. K.H. Abshagen, "Canaris—Patriot and Citizen of the World," Stuttgart, 1950, p 167; Walter Hagen, op. cit., p 62; George Bailey, op. cit., p 207; "On the Tukhachevskiy Case" (author not given), "Modern

History," 8th Edition (1958), p 77; Heinrich Teske, "General Ernst Kostring," Frankfurt, 1966; Ericson (p 434) doubts, however, that Heydrich requested this from Canaris.

28. W. Shellenberg, op. cit., pp 31, 49; Walter Hagen, op. cit., p 62. Gothold Rode voices major doubts on the reliability of this version and the authenticity of this entire case "due to the adventuristic nature of the action and certain contradictions in its description" in his article "1938 in European and German History," published in the collection "Problems of Czech History," Munich, 1964, p 140 et seq. An anonymous author describes this as a "detective novel, a romance of swindling and pirate histories" ("On the Tukhachevskiy Case," p 77). Ericson also (p 434) considers the story about the raid on the counterintelligence archives as unreliable.

29. The most reliable seems the description of the technical details in manufacturing the "documents" and the ways by which harmless authentic documents were turned into forgeries as found in Ericson (p 456-458). Ericson correctly dates the time of the manufacturing of the "SD Dossier" to April 1937 which conforms to the Czechoslovak documents.

30. Walter Hagen, op. cit., p 63; V.G. Krivitskiy, op. cit., p 261; "On the Tukhachevskiy Case," p 77; W. Strobing, op. cit., p 247; G. Ericson, op. cit., p 435.

31. Ericson proposes (p 436) that Berlin, Paris, Prague and Moscow were those four points between which the NKVD fought the SD, the Czechoslovak Secret Service and the White Guard emigre circles.

32. W. Shellenberg, op. cit., p 49; Walter Hagen, op. cit., p 62 et seq.; "On the Tukhachevskiy Case," p 78; W. Strobing, op. cit., p 247.

33. W. Shellenberg, op. cit., p 50; Walter Hagen, op. cit., p 62 et seq.; "On the Tukhachevskiy Case," p 78; W. Strobing, op. cit., p 248.

34. W. Shellenberg, op. cit., p 50; Walter Hagen, op. cit., p 65; "On the Tukhachevskiy Case," p 78; W. Strobing, op. cit., p 247.

35. Just how intimate and intense were the contacts of Benes with Wittig and his trust in him can be seen from one postwar letter in which Benes expresses warm gratitude to Wittig for his "services." "Letter from the chief of the political section of the president's chancellory Dr Yan Iin Wittig. Prague, 24 December 1946, R15088/46," Archives of the Chancellory of the Republic President in Prague.

Appendix 1: Czechoslovak Ambassador Dr Vojtek Mastny to the President of the Nation, Dr Eduard Benes, Berlin, 9 February 1937.

Today I was visited by Count Trautmansdorf and informed that a definite delay had occurred in the talks over the treaty. The Reichschancellor was very dissatisfied with the publishing of Seba's book about Russia and the Little Entente¹ from which is it clear to what significant degree Czechoslovakia is tied to Russia. For this reason, the Reichschancellor intends to put off further talks with Czechoslovakia by some 10-14 days until the Seba affair becomes clear. This should not mean that Hitler has changed his position on the given question but is merely proposing that the current moment is not favorable for this. I said that I could scarcely comprehend that the Seba book on the basis of which propaganda has artificially fabricated things against us and which are generally not mentioned there could, to such a degree influence the Reichschancellor. All the more as from us there had been assurances in which the president of the republic personally explained the nature of our political treaty with Russia. At the same time, I added that we, however, can do nothing more than take this into consideration.

I stated that at last, after detailed talks with Gobbels, Funk and Rosenberg, I did not understand at all how this campaign could be continued during the period of talks, when a single order from the Reichschancellor would suffice to halt these things. And that we had not assumed

such a "musical accompaniment" to our talks after the initiative of the chancellor to establish personal contact with the president of the republic. Count Trautmansdorf in an extremely polite manner recognized my rebukes and statements as correct. First of all, as for the occurring delay, he requested simultaneously that this information be kept secret and that the actual reason for the decision of the chancellor to shift the talks was his assumption based on certain information which he had received from Russia that there in the near future an unexpected coup was possible which should lead to the elimination of Stalin and Litvinov and the establishing of a military dictatorship. If this happened, the Reichschancellor would supposedly alter his position vis-a-vis Russia and would be simultaneously ready to resolve all problems related to Western and Eastern Europe, of course, again by concluding bilateral treaties.

I set out for Count Trautmansdorf an analysis of the situation in Russia, as it seems to us, together with serious doubts that there would be a coup to a military dictatorship and the elimination of Stalin. However, at the same time I said that I, of course, was unaware whether Prague had any information from recent days and if so, what it was....

Mastny Archives, Archives of National Museum, Prague
(Translation from Czech by the author)

Appendix 2: Czechoslovak Ambassador, Dr Vojtec Mastny, to Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr Kamil Krofta, Berlin, 20 March 1937

I am convinced that the probing of both emissaries was carried out upon instructions of superior imperial circles and was aimed at putting us out of the treaty system with Russia. I recall that more than a month ago I submitted a report according to which the Reichschancellor supposedly possesses information on the possibility of a surprise and soon-to-be coup in Russia, on the possibility of eliminating Stalin and Litvinov and establishing a military dictatorship in Moscow, as a result of which a major change in German policy might occur vis-a-vis Russia; for this, as is known, with the current state of affairs there has been and is still sufficient sympathy in the German Army. As I have learned from a well-informed source, Schacht is also in favor of this as he to an ever-greater degree is experiencing a need to broaden the exchange of economic ties with Russia which at the current stage have suffered greatly as a consequence of the negative position of Moscow. Hitler, I have been assured, until recently has refused Schacht's requests to bring about an improvement in the economic ties with Russia by some changes in the stance on political questions. However, it is also known that the German Ambassador in Moscow Schullenburg was recently in Berlin and in line with this it is assumed that the new considerations of the Reichschancellor relative to the change in all relations with Russia arose precisely on the basis of information which the ambassador brought from Moscow. Of course, it is impossible to obtain more

detailed information on the given question, however it can be said with certainty that the ideas on the possibility of any substantial change in policy vis-a-vis Russia should also bear influence in assessing the question of the development of relations with Czechoslovakia and specifically the question of the possible treaty settlement of relations with us.

Archives of Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Prague. Berlin, 1937, No 19; Order 1937 (Translated from Czech by author)

Appendix 3: Czechoslovak Ambassador Bogdan Pavlu to the Minister of Foreign Affairs Kamil Krofta, Moscow, 20 June 1937

It seems that this was a question of war and peace which finally settled the fate of Tukhachevskiy in the event that Tukhachevskiy had tried, as could be assumed, to win over people in the Higher Military Council and in the higher military and governmental circles and possibly in the Comintern where an energetic purge is now being conducted in parallel there. They assert that Stalin had such mistrust of all the members of the Communist International and primarily the former Imperial Germans who for provocative purposes advised initiating a military conflict against Germany and drew suspicion in the fact that they, pursuing their own personal interests, endeavored primarily to overthrow the Soviet system. The problem, particularly of a premature war, is simultaneously a problem of the existence of the Soviet system and for this reason it was not surprising that a conflict arose between Stalin and Tukhachevskiy and the investigation of this was tragic for the opponents of the Stalinist peace policy and the possible domestic political consequences of this were repudiated from the very outset by the fact that the corps commanders lost the right to take independent decisions and by the fact that military councils (actually political councils) were organized. Under such circumstances it was later not difficult to formulate accusations against Tukhachevskiy of "military, fascist and counterrevolutionary treachery," and accuse him of subversive activities in the army, in conducting sabotage of national defense and in the economy, and ascribe to him a desire to eliminate the Soviet system and its main representatives as well as charge him, on the basis of previous contact with the German Army, of espionage and the betraying of military secrets to Germany and then the intention to split up the Soviet Union.

Archives of Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Prague, Moscow, 1937, No 34 (Translated from Czech by the author)

Footnote

1. In the book "Russia and the Little Entente in World Policy" published in Prague in 1936, its author Jan Sheba, the Czechoslovak ambassador to Bucharest, expressed regret over the defeat of the Soviet troops in the 1920 Soviet-Polish War as this led to a situation

where the Soviet Union did not have a common frontier with Czechoslovakia. The presence of such a frontier, in his opinion, would have made it significantly easier for the providing of Soviet military aid to Czechoslovakia to the eastern regions of Poland. For this reason, the book caused a major, although somewhat feigned scandal and the author was relieved of his diplomatic post in 1937.

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We Through Eyes of Others

00010003g Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY
ZHURNAL in Russian No 10, Oct 88 (signed to press
23 Sep 88) pp 54-62

[Article, published under the heading "In the NATO Armies," by R.G. Kersho Para: "We Through the Eyes of Others"; the foreword and translation are by Col I.T. Fateyev and is based upon the experience of Wehrmacht operations on the Soviet-German Front]

[Text] [Introduction] In the September issue of 1987, the journal of the Royal Institute for the Investigation of Defense Questions (RUSI) under the heading "Military History" published an article "Lessons From the Wehrmacht's Experience on the Soviet-German Front, 1943-1945." It was written by the English Lt Col R.G. Kersho Para and he is a liaison officer at the Bundeswehr Infantry School in Hammelburg.

The Royal Institute for the Investigation of Defense Questions was set up under the patronage of the English Queen in the aim of developing military science and literature. The institute has its own journal which is concerned with the examination of military, political and economic questions.

On military-political questions, this journal reflects the views of the aggressive imperialist NATO circles. Here there is no need to the generally familiar truths about the aims of this military bloc. At the same time, it must be pointed out that in the West there has been a strong rise in the interest paid to military history, particularly to the history of World War II. Foreign authors again and again come back to this subject and constantly endeavor to show that the Soviet people won more by numbers than by ability, that a "herd feeling" was inherent to the Russian soldier while the Soviet commander showed no initiative and inertia of thought. Like many bourgeois authors, R.G. Kersho Para feels that only the inevitability of punishment held the Soviet soldiers on the front line. This is a slandering of the heroes whomever the author might refer to. Our soldiers fought not out of fear of punishment but because they were defending their motherland and their people against the black death which threatened enslavement for the entire world. There is an obvious desire on the part of our ideological opponents to profoundly distort the image of the Soviet soldier. The article's author concludes that the military NATO bloc must oppose the numerical superiority of the

Soviet Army with the achievements of modern technology. Lt Col Kersho Para has his own understanding and treatment of questions of military art on the part of the belligerents on the Soviet-German Front. It would be interesting for the Soviet reader, particularly the military one, to know the opinion of military historians and specialists in the West on what they consider instructive in the Wehrmacht's operations on the Soviet-German Front. These operations, in the author's opinion, can be instructive for further improving the structure and combat training of the NATO troops. It should be pointed out that the article's author is too liberal with the figures and data of the belligerents, referring to sources which err in historical inaccuracy and at times simply distort the truth. The article extols the military art (particularly the tactics) of the Wehrmacht. There are numerous contradictory assertions. The author writes that the fear of making a mistake fettered initiative and that hundreds of Soviet generals were executed and turned over by the soldiers to penalty battalions. At the same time, he emphasizes that the Soviet Army included highly trained commanders and a first-rate staff system. In endeavoring to spread mistrust of the USSR, the author frequently represents the strong points of the Soviet Armed Forces during the years of World War II as a threat to NATO. For instance, he points out that, in employing the experience of achieving surprise and in skillfully carrying out disinformation measures, the Soviet Army could catch the NATO Armed Forces by surprise. Kersho Para warns the West that they must not be too overconfident in assessing the combat qualities of the Soviet Armed Forces. Here the author asserts that regardless of the unlimited military capabilities, the Russians could not deal with the bands in Afghanistan over a period of 6 years, forgetting to say that the limited Soviet troop contingent was carrying out its international duty and was helping to defend the independence of its good neighbor, against which an undeclared war was being waged by the forces of world imperialism headed by the United States supporting the counterrevolution. If there had not been help from outside for the counterrevolutionaries, then there would have been no need for a Soviet presence in Afghanistan. Here it is not a question of "dealing with a handful of bandits" but rather providing decisive aid to the Afghan people in defending the victories of their revolution.

The article is given in the journal virtually completely.

From the Editors. The years 1941-1942 for us have been a matter of discussion almost from 1945. The Wehrmacht historians have their own "damned spot" and namely the years 1943-1945. The reader is left to himself to compare the degree of frankness and the level of analysis of our "damned spot," for example, by the same L.M. Sandalov with the degree of frankness and the level of analysis of the "damned spot" by Kersho Para in the history of the war of Nazi Germany against the USSR. [End of Introduction]

"Lessons From the Wehrmacht's Experience on the Soviet-German Front, 1943-1945"

by R.G. Kersho Para

At dawn on 2 May 1944, the XVI Tank Corps of the Soviet troops attacked the Nazi positions along the entire front at Targul-Frumos, the Carpathians and Romania.* The basic force of the blow was taken by a German regiment (which in the present NATO organization corresponds to a brigade) tank division Grosse Deutschland.

Regardless of the heavy losses, the troops were able to breach the enemy's defenses on two sectors.

The German XXIV Panzer Division of the XLVII Panzer Corps, in being in the reserve on this sector of the front and fighting as part of two combat mixed groups, launched a powerful counterstrike. By the end of the day the front had been restored....

The Wehrmacht Command on the Soviet-German Front had planned the operations, assuming a balance of forces of 1:5 in favor of the enemy, counting on success (the formations were to be up to full strength and well armed).¹

How was this so? Could this be repeated with NATO in our own times, when pessimists predict that a conventional war would last only 8 days? But the Wehrmacht waged war for 2 years against such forces.

Tactical Considerations

The Eastern Campaign of the Germans offers certain tactical lessons from the subunits and units from battalion to brigade. These lessons, particularly in the area of troop command and control, are pertinent in our days.

Yassi serves as a useful reference reflecting both the organization of a positional defense as well as the execution of a counterstrike with armored forces.

Positional Defense

By 1943-1944, the Wehrmacht was conducting defensive engagements, relying on the deep antitank defenses with the launching of counterattacks by panzer formations. The documents from the defensive battles of the Division Gross Deutschland show the importance of the careful preparation of the defensive positions and their early reconnaissance.

Cooperation and Effectiveness

Division Commander Manteuffel particularly emphasized several points in his report after the engagement. The most important is for the average soldier to have a clear "battle task": to "defend" and "hold the positions." If this is unclear, then he (the squad commander) feels that he is permitted to defer or carry out a

temporary retreat. The basis of the defense is in the closest cooperation of the infantry with all the combat arms supporting it. The tanks must always be concentrated for carrying out the counterattacks.

In an engagement tanks must be given preference over the other types of weapons. They must be used on a massed basis and the armored forces must not be split up. It is always essential to keep a tank reserve in depth and here commit to battle only that number of tanks to keep initiative in one's hands. And lastly: the artillery should not blindly follow the fire support plan but rather respond flexibly to a change in the battle situation. First of all, it is essential to achieve the highest concentration of artillery fire to eliminate the enemy resistance. The latter comment concerns the caliber of the artillery shells necessary to create the maximum shell density. Certain NATO combat units greatly require shells of such a caliber. Artillery shells of 105-mm will be ineffective in firing at modern Soviet tanks.

Mobile Defense

Conducting operations for a mobile defense assumes particular importance due to the high degree of mechanization achieved both by the NATO forces and Warsaw Pact.

In the course of the war on the Soviet-German Front there was the obvious phenomenon: if the Germans did not establish mobile reserves, any fortified lines of their defenses were quickly crushed. Freedom of action and concentration of forces were the main principles of mobility. They became the synonyms of the principle of granting the commander independence in carrying out the battle task (Auftragstaktik) and made it possible for the Wehrmacht to achieve a high level of mobility in military operations by 1943.

The term "Auftragstaktik" is difficult to translate literally but it can be precisely explained: this is an integrated tactical procedure whereby the commander is given a clear battle task the means for executing it are also provided. How he is to execute it is for himself to decide.

The conclusion of the practical importance of this for the inferior levels can be drawn from talks with former Wehrmacht commanders.⁴ Experience quickly forced the commanders and all the personnel of the combat units to find a general method of operations (modus operandi) which would simplify the process of working out and issuing orders. In peacetime this is difficult to do without resorting to the rigid demands of combined-arms combat training.

The Wehrmacht gave enormous importance to the combat training of the deputy commanders even if it was required to send officers from the front and strip it. This must not be forgotten in peacetime. The use of mobile forces organized as combined-arms combat groups has

shown that combat operations can be conducted successfully against a numerically superior enemy under the condition of the presence of high morale, the skillful employment of the terrain and flexible troop command and control.

A study of the process of working out orders in a corps and issuing them to the combat subunits during the fighting at Iasi provides a clear understanding that these orders, in excelling in simplicity and terseness and maturity, provided the troops on the spot with freedom in executing them. The order received from the corps by the 24th Panzer Division which was in the reserve was terse: to destroy the enemy which had broken through and restore the situation. The clear battle task and complete freedom of action were expressed here by two sentences.⁵ In the other instance an order to the division provided complete power to two combat groups which were to "meet" the enemy advancing from two sectors.⁶ It consisted of seven sentences. The longest order was sent to the combat subunits from combat group "B." And here as well complete freedom of action was provided. In this information was provided on the enemy, the battle task for the division, the task for the combat group, the battle formation, the rear services and the location of the commander—all of this in nine sentences.⁷

This was an art requiring high preparation of the commanders and the chiefs of all levels. This did not come about automatically in a peacetime army. The main thing here is to provide the troops on the front with as much time as possible for combat work. The response speed to enemy actions was much higher for the Germans than for the Russians. Gen Balck, the commander of the 11th Panzer Division fighting on the Chir River in 1942, recalled that it took him 10 hours to successfully organize and conduct a counterattack after a 20-km night march, when he received data on a major Russian breakthrough.

On the basis of studying the documents relating to the Iasi engagement, it can be concluded that a dependable guarantee for success in a mobile defense lies in attacking the enemy at that moment when it is least prepared to repulse the attack: that is, at a moment when the enemy itself is intending to attack.

"Launch an attack against the enemy when it is on the move. Its losses will be so great that it will abandon its plans."⁸ It has been established that the best result is achieved when the enemy is given an opportunity to advance and then a surprise attack is launched against it.

Combat Experience

The combat experience gained in the fighting on the Soviet-German Front can be employed today. Balck was the supporter of employing mines to establish a "false front."⁹ The mines were positioned in depth behind the cover forces. The enemy, in endeavoring to destroy these

forces, ended up in the midst of a minefield. Thus, the axis of the main efforts of an infiltrating enemy is discovered and the enemy is surrounded by armored reserves. The new generation of modern minds increases the effectiveness of such tactics.

The staffs will be less vulnerable when positioned in unpredicted areas, far from the roads, where they will not be distracted from the main duties of the movement of enemy or friendly troops. The NATO staffs will basically be located in mountainous localities.

Antitank Defense

The loss by the Russians of 24 tanks out of the 34 which had broken through to the village of Targul-Frumos near Iasi was clear substantiation of the excellent skills of the German infantry in combating tanks in close combat. The NATO infantry, possibly, is less prepared to repulse such a breakthrough than its colleagues from the Wehrmacht. Technical progress has freed the infantry from the lethal threat of close combat, having provided it with special platoons armed with portable ATGM [Antitank Guided Missiles] of the Milan, Tow and other classes. Presently they basically use individual antitank weapons the firing of which produces a strong jet exhaust and the firer himself can fire from a building or a bunker. The so-called special "lethal methods" of combating tanks in close combat as employed by the German infantry in the past would rarely be employed now. Tank breakthroughs in the Wehrmacht are considered an ordinary phenomenon. For this reason, combat skills and the presence of effective individual weapons for combating the tanks have given the personnel confidence in battle.

Many authors have pointed to the effectiveness of an assault gun or the antitank SAU [self-propelled artillery mount]¹⁰ which can be a cheap and effective tactical means for combating a Soviet tank threat. The assault guns were initially developed for artillery support of the motorized infantry. But due to the effectiveness of these infantry antitank weapons in combating the new classes of Russian tanks, they became the basic weapon of antitank defense. NATO can draw benefit from this experience and develop a new generation of assault guns which will cost less than modern tanks. The low-profile Swedish tank is a step in this direction although the Bundeswehr is still armed with antitank guns mounted on a self-propelled carriage.

Effectiveness of Employing the Antitank SAU

The experience of employing self-propelled weapons on the Soviet-German Front does not provide a universal solution to eliminating the threat of the Warsaw Pact armored troops. The German self-propelled guns were not superior to the Soviet tanks. Their effectiveness was achieved by the better tactical employment and artillery skill of the crews. The basic purpose of their employment was not only antitank defense of the other combat arms. They comprised the basis of the reinforced points for

interdicting enemy breakthroughs or impeded an enemy advance, while the tanks came out in the enemy rear and flank. The German panzer commanders for completely understandable reasons had a critical view of the self-propelled guns from the viewpoint of their tactical employment because the crews of the self-propelled guns consisted of artillery troops and because tank chassis had to be provided for the self-propelled guns.

Assault guns could be beneficial for NATO under the condition that it was possible to develop a powerful assault gun, spending on its production 3- or 4-fold less than on producing a single tank. This will hardly be done as modern technology provides the opportunity to produce easily camouflaged portable antitank units.

The main lesson which can be gained from Wehrmacht operations on the Soviet-German Front from the viewpoint of tactical skill is the able and flexible control of the troops which shortened the time to work out response actions against a numerically superior enemy.

Organization and Establishment Considerations

The organization and establishment of the combat groups which fought at Iasi differed little from the structure of the Bundeswehr motorized brigades today.

Martin van Krefeld has provided material confirming that the German Army in the course of World War II caused greater losses to its enemies in terms of personnel than did its allies.¹¹ This was achieved by developing a military infrastructure exclusively in the interests of combat operations. This was established proceeding from the operational, psychological and social needs of the frontline soldier and thus created a higher concentration of "combat might" for each combat unit than was observed among its allies. This system minimized the paper "red tape" which fettered the troops and which we are well acquainted with in peacetime. The German General Staff here played the main role. The main rule for promotion in service until 1943 was the system of evaluating the officers who followed the principle of *Auftragstaktik* (the principle of granting a commander independence in executing a battle task).

This does not mean that such qualities are no longer valued in the armies of the West today. However, it is inevitable that in peacetime the armies "go to fat" and pay more attention to administration. These qualities are important in peacetime but become irreplaceable during a war. Here it is essential to strive for a reasonable balance so that the administrative and operational orders do not jeopardize combat effectiveness.

Combat effectiveness as demonstrated by the Wehrmacht was achieved by a rational divisional structure. The effective combat strength was 84.5 percent of the total divisional strength. This figure could be useful for the constituting of NATO troops today. Actual service provided an incentive for a rational organization and

establishment. In 1939, the average Wehrmacht division numbered 15,000-17,000 men in strength. By 1945, this number had declined to 11,000-13,000 men but here fire power had increased, basically due to infantry weapons.¹² Technical progress has somewhat overshadowed these positive aspects in comparing them with the NATO divisions. Suffice it to say that the NATO divisions are closer to the size of the peacetime Wehrmacht divisions but are more powerful and more mobile. All the NATO brigades are better equipped. Each brigade is armed with over 100 main battle tanks, although American divisions include an even larger number of them. It is interesting to note the fact that as yet no one has achieved such a ratio as Guderian insisted on, showing that a successful defense should be based on large-scale offensive actions and not on actions aimed at holding a line.¹³

Although NATO has supported such requirements, the offensive power of certain troop contingents in this bloc is still limited. And such a situation is scarcely likely to change if political and financial considerations and not operational arguments will continue to determine the divisional structure.

Effective Organization

The Wehrmacht command structure was much less cumbersome than the NATO command structure. The staff of a German armored division in 1944 consisted of 21 officers and 881 junior officers (7.09 percent of the entire personnel). The staff of an infantry division consisted of 25 officers and 484 junior officers and this was 3.87 percent of all the divisional personnel.¹⁴ If we take for comparison the smallest NATO armored division, we will see that on its staff there are 7-fold more officers than in a Wehrmacht division. Moreover, in a modern NATO brigade there is one-third more officers than there was on the staff of a Wehrmacht division. If one does not consider the difference in the technical level, then such a luxury is unacceptable by any measure.

Gen Panzer Trps Balck argued for small divisions in a desire to achieve greater maneuverability and effectiveness of command and control. Such divisions could be easily and flexibly commanded by medium-skill officers. He felt that cumbersome combat units in battle (a division of 15,000 men) would suffer greater unnecessary casualties with the same successes.¹⁵ Proceeding from personal experience, the general proposed three types of armored divisions: a heavy breakthrough division, an ordinary division for mobile operations and a division for combating enemy forces which had broken through.¹⁶ The NATO leadership, in light of the defensive doctrine of "forward lines," has defended two types of divisions: a division for defending forward lines and a division for launching counterattacks. In the first type of division there will be a predominance of infantry and antitank weapons and in the second armored equipment. The equipment has provided a majority of divisions with the possibility of having combined-arms weapons for all

instances of unforeseen circumstances from the viewpoint of tactics. The experience of World War II shows that specialization provides benefits and does not jeopardize flexibility of actions. All of this can ease the demands placed on combat training in certain NATO armies where there are no mercenary soldiers and thereby ease for them the burden of expenditures as a result in the shortening of the length of service. The greater the demands placed upon skill in combating mobile armored forces the easier this can be achieved by specialization in the combat training system. This will be a solution to the problems related to the Warsaw Pact.

Operational Evaluations

The combat operations of the Wehrmacht army on the Soviet-German Front must be carefully analyzed on an operational level (division and army group) because they demonstrated the classic variation of defense: positional and mobile. The achievements were paradoxical. On the southern sector of the Soviet-German Front, at the beginning of 1943, the Russians pushed back Army Group B and in continuous assaults destroyed it. Army Group Don under the command of Field Mar von Manstein was able to secure Hitler's permission for a planned retreat over hundreds of kilometers and this allowed it the possibility of assembling forces to conduct a successful counteroffensive.

The lesson which NATO can draw for itself is clear: no matter how good tactics is, if you are unable to work out an operationally correct plan, you have lost. The defeat of Army Group Center which Hitler deprived of operational flexibility in the autumn of 1943 was the "Cannae" of the ground forces in the East. Some 28 divisions out of 38 were completely destroyed. The losses were 350,000-400,000 men.¹⁷

Positional and Mobile Defense (1943-1945)

The experience of the German Army on the Soviet-German Front has provided a number of prerequisites for conducting a successful defensive on the main defensive position. Gen Guderian insisted on the necessity of having a forward defensive line which was a conventional defensive line shifted 12 miles ahead of the basic or main defensive line.¹⁸ This was the concept of a flexible defense in contrast to a rigid one. The troops retreated to the second defensive line before the start of the assumed enemy artillery softening up, leaving a security detachment which by holding actions weakened the forward enemy units or a final defeat was launched on the main defensive line. Proceeding from personal experience gained from World War I, Hitler insisted that the second defensive line run 1 or 2 miles from the front line and as a result of this, in the January Offensive of 1945 on the Vistula River, the German reserves positioned close to the front were quickly destroyed. The NATO doctrine of "forward lines" thus imposes on the commanders political and strategic decisions to deploy their forces much closer to the probable enemy than

would be dictated by the terrain conditions and tactics. However, in this strategy the goal has been clearly defined: first halt the enemy and then defeat it.

Intuition suggested to the Wehrmacht that by a flexible defense it was possible only to parry the enemy's blow but its offensive could be stopped only by fully employing the force of a counterstrike to a great depth.

In May 1980, the US BDM Corporation organized a conference for former German commanders who participated in the war and the NATO commanders in the aim of analyzing the lessons of the Soviet-German Front and their pertinence for modern conditions in Central Europe.¹⁹ A study on working out the questions of the modern defensive engagement of NATO troops showed the following: the veteran Wehrmacht commanders were ready to admit that the enemy would be able to drive deeply into the NATO defenses before being stopped and destroyed as a result of a strong counterstrike. NATO (the United States) would endeavor to draw the enemy into "pockets" and destroy it as a result of counterattacks. But the problem is that the depth of these "pockets" will be too great for the probable "victors" (Germans) in a war and for this reason such a decision would be politically unacceptable for the West today.²⁰

The Wehrmacht was never strong enough to hold the defensive in a large geographic zone of responsibility. The freedom of action and the concentration of forces in mobile operations provided an opportunity to ensure flexibility in combat and this made it possible to hold the front. Manstein, for example, in 1943 stripped the troop positions on the Mius River regardless of the critical situation, in order to create a powerful "fist" for launching a counterstrike by the forces of Army Group Don.

Attempts by the Bundeswehr to Resolve the Dilemma of the Defensive

The operational experience of the German Army on the Soviet-German Front inevitably has had an influence on the postwar development of the Bundeswehr's defensive concepts.²¹ From the very outset, because of necessity, the Bundeswehr has been staffed by officers and other specialists from the Wehrmacht officers. These lessons are also pertinent to NATO because in contrast to the armies of the other bloc members, the Bundeswehr was concerned exclusively with the problems of defending Europe. It has not been drawn into Vietnam or other revolutionary conflicts.

In the first Bundeswehr Field Manual T-56 (1956), one could feel the influence of the last confused defensive engagements of the collapsing Reich. The defensive was perceived in the light of positional infantry defensive actions (due to the lack of mechanized mobile weapons). The defenses consisted of a line of strongpoints, where they would establish a third of the personnel and equipment positioned in depth for launching counterattacks.

The subsequent Field Manual TG-59 (1959) provided for the abandoning of a positional defense. The concept appeared of the "defense of an area" within which to its entire depth mobile combat actions would be carried out. Here it was assumed that it was not essential to rout the enemy on a certain defensive position but rather defeat it within the given area. The Field Manual TG-62 (1962) heralded a further rise in the mechanization of the Bundeswehr. According to it the defensive should be conducted by minimal forces on the forward edge and these were to be supported by powerful mobile forces from the interior. This is approximately what the ground forces of the Reich would have ideally desired on the Soviet-German Front.

The next Field Manual of 1953 was forced to consider the strategic reality that in the FRG there was not sufficient depth due to the fact that 30 percent of the population and 25 percent of the industrial potential were concentrated in the 100-km border inner zone²² which had to be held. In this manual, there appeared such concepts as "key terrain" and "blocking." "It is very important to defeat the enemy breaking through into the defensive area or fighting on its first position...the forces defending the forward edge should be the strongest."²³

(Conclusion Follows)

Footnotes

* On the Targul-Frumos sector was fighting the XVIII Tank Corps of Maj Gen V.I. Polozkov. The German Command, in endeavoring to push the Soviet troops back behind the Prut, undertook a counteroffensive in the Iasi area with the forces of 10 divisions, including 4 panzer ones ("Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy voyny 1939-1945" [History of World War II of 1939-1945], Moscow, Voenizdat, Vol 8, 1977, p 101).

1. "Panzer Battles," Maj Gen V.W. von Mellenthin (University of Oklahoma Press, 1956), p 306; "Lost Victories," Field Mar E. von Manstein (originally published, 1953), 1982, Arms and Armour Press, London, p 453.

2. [Not in text]

3. [Not in text]

4. Translation of tape-recorded conversations with Gen H. Balck and Maj Gen F.W. von Mellenthin: Gen Hermann Balck, 12 January 1979, Batelle Columbus Laboratories, DAAK-40-78-C-0004; *ibid.*, 14 April 1979, Contract No DAAK-40-78-C-0004; Gen H. Balck and Maj Gen F.W. von Mellenthin, BDM Corporation, Results of Conference on Tactical Warfare 19-22 May 1980.

5. "Kriegsgeschichtliche Beispiele Jassy," p 149.

6. *Ibid.*, p 150.

7. *Ibid.*, p 151.

8. Comment by Gen von Senger-Etterlin who during the battle was a senior lieutenant. "Kriegsgeschichtliche Beispiele," p 157.

9. "General Balck," January 1979, pp 11-12.

10. "War on the Eastern Front," James Lucas (Bookclub Associates, London, 1980), Chapters 19-22, "Lightning War. A History of Blitzkrieg," Byron Perrett (Panther, 1985), pp 214-231.

11. "Fighting Power," in "Contributions to Military History," Greenwood Press, No 32, 1982, p 6.

12. "German Army Handbook 1939-1945," W.J.K. Davies (Jan Allen, 1973, p 8): the reorganization of the divisions was also dictated by the need to make up for the enormous losses. By the end of September 1941, the losses alone in the Wehrmacht ground troops had reached over 552,000 men and this was 16.7 percent of the initial number ("Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy...", Moscow, Voenizdat, Vol 4, 1957, p 88).

13. "Panzer Leader. General H. Guderian," Michael Joseph, 1952, p 295.

14. Greven, pp 49-50.

15. "General Balck," January 1979, pp 37, 60.

16. *Ibid.*, p 43.

17. The term employed by P. Carell in "Scorched Earth," Harrap, 1970, p 508.

18. "Panzer Leader...", p 377.

19. US BDM Corporation on Tactical Warfare, Director of Net Assessment, Office of the Secretary of Defense, U.S. Army, 19-20 May 1980.

20. The words of von Mellenthin in "Panzer Battles," pp 265-266.

21. "Die Entwicklung der Gefechtsart Verteidigung seit dem 18. Jahrhundert," OTL Hans-Peter Stein, "Kriegsgeschichtliche Beispiele," No 1, pp 31-32).

22. "Weissbuch," 1963, Der Bundesminister der Verteidigung, p 146.

23. TG-73. Quoted in: Hans-Peter Stein, p 32.

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Operations of Egyptian, Israeli Armies in Suez Canal Zone in 1973 War

00010003h Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY
ZHURNAL in Russian No 10, Oct 88 (signed to press
23 Sep 88) pp 63-70

[Article, published under the heading "Local Wars," by Col R.M. Loskutov, candidate of military sciences, docent; and Lt Col O.I. Latushko, candidate of military sciences: "Combat Actions of Egyptian and Israeli Armies in the Suez Canal Zone in the 1973 War"; the article was written from materials in the foreign press]

[Text] The Arab-Israeli War which broke out on 6 October 1973 and lasted for 19 days again turned the Near East into an arena of fierce, bloody fighting. The war was a consequence of the policy of the imperialist states which shows the Israeli Zionists as a weapon in fighting against the national movement of the Arab peoples for restoring their former state in this area.

The article, on a basis of an analysis made by foreign military specialists of the over-all plan of the sides and the course of the fighting, brings out certain questions in the development of military art.

After the 1967 war, the ruling circles of Israel set the goal of securing the occupied Arab lands. The Israeli Command chose as the main means for achieving this the increased military might of the state. Great attention was given to increasing the mobility of the troops, to strengthening the fire power and assault force of the formations and units as well as to improving the command and skills of the reservists. The Israeli Army Command trained the troops for both offensive and defensive actions.

Egypt and Syria began to prepare for a struggle to liberate the Israeli-occupied lands immediately after the 1967 war. Due to the all-round collaboration with the USSR and the other socialist countries, they succeeded in not only replenishing the 1967 losses but also significantly increasing the combat might of the armed forces.

The military-political leadership of Egypt, in planning the offensive operations against Egypt, set limited goals of crossing the Suez Canal and capturing a line running along the Mitla Pass, the Gidi Pass, Meles and in taking a decision to resume military operations, obviously was generally not planning on the possibility of achieving a major victory. Clearly, they had in mind a demonstration of the readiness to settle the Near East problem by armed force, to create the appearance of broadening the Near East conflict, drawing the attention of the Great Powers to the Near East and with their aid settling the crisis in the given area of the world. Such military-political goals predetermined the direction and content of the plans for military operations.

The Egyptian Command intended, with artillery and air support and under the cover of SAM [surface-to-air missile] and antiaircraft artillery fire, to cross the Suez Canal to the south and north of the Great Bitter Lake, to breach the enemy defenses and defeat it in the Canal Zone and on the 7th-8th day of the offensive to capture the line of Gebel—Alak, Gebel—Umm-Hisheiba, Gebel—Umm—Mahasa, Gebel—Umm—Magarim and the Mitla and Gidi Passes where they would dig in and force Israel into talks and clear the captured lands.¹

The main assault was planned to be launched to the north of the Great Bitter Lake with the forces of the 2d Army and the second one to the south of the Great Bitter Lake with the forces of the 3d Army.

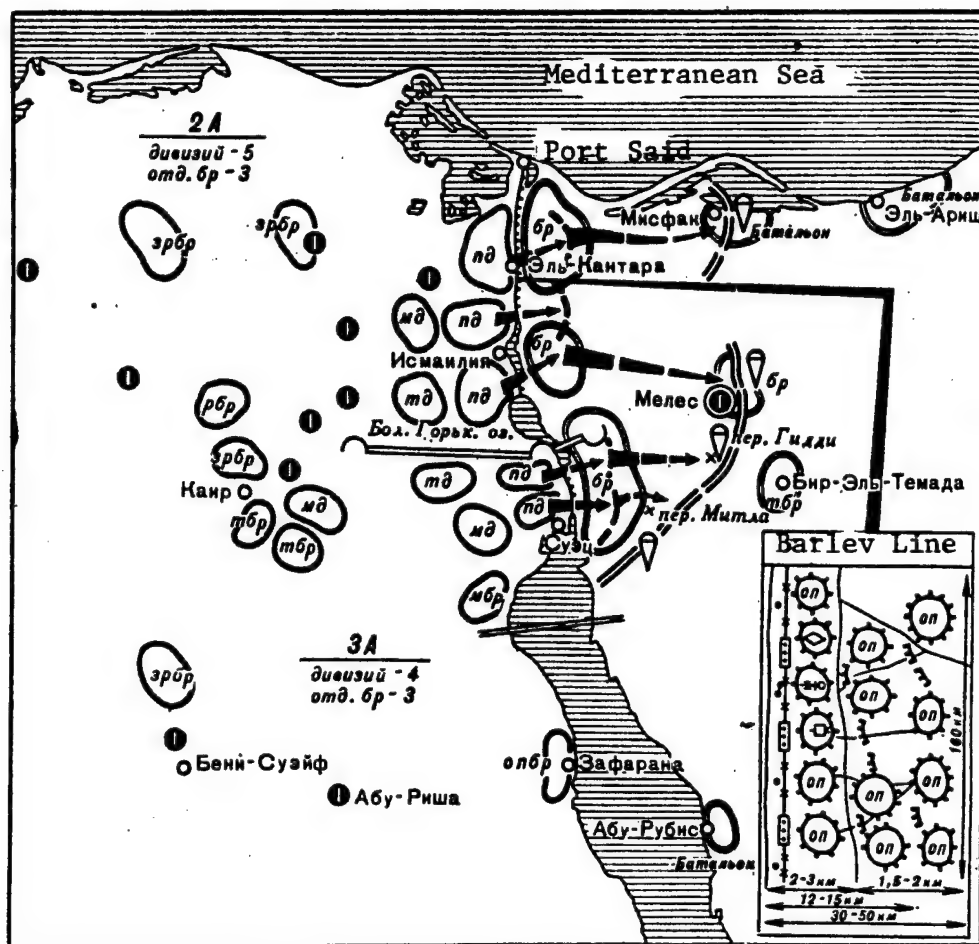
The plan of the operation envisaged the crossing of the Suez Canal by the first echelon divisions along a broad front, the breaching of the enemy defenses along the east bank of the Canal, the capturing of divisional bridgeheads up to 12-15 km in depth, and then combining these into an army one, the crossing of the SAM and second echelon divisions to the other side and after which the offensive was to be exploited and the subsequent task set.²

The operational configuration of the armies was envisaged in two echelons. The first echelon infantry divisions were given a zone 15-20 km wide and the brigades 5-7 km. The depth of the near task for the armies was set at 12-15 km and the further task 25-30 km. The 2d Army was reinforced with a mechanized division from the Supreme High Command Reserve (see the Diagram).

In analyzing the plan of the Egyptian Army, foreign specialists have pointed out that basically it would provide for the carrying out of the set tasks. Its positive aspect was: the establishing of significant superiority on the sector of the main thrust, the echeloned configuration of the troops as this made it possible to boost the effort as well as maneuver the forces. At the same time, its weak points were: the indecisiveness and general passivity of the plan as this led subsequently to the loss of initiative; no consideration was given to possible variations of action by the Israeli troops. It was felt that they would merely be on the defensive.

The Israelis created their plan of action considering the prompt detection of the preparations by the Arab armed forces for the offensive and the taking of the necessary measures to thwart this.

The plan of the Israeli Command consisted, relying on the previously prepared defensive line, to prevent the Egyptian troops from breaking through into the Sinai Peninsula, and in the event of a breakthrough by strong counterstrikes to defeat the Egyptians and restore the situation. With a favorable situation a offensive against



**Troop Grouping of the Sides
in the Zone of the Egyptian Front**

Cairo was planned.³ For this they planned to employ 16-18 brigades, 800 tanks and 1,300 guns and mortars for simultaneous operations against Egypt and Syria on the Sinai Front.⁴

The Israeli troops on the Sinai Peninsula created a deeply echeloned defense and this was equipped in terms of the last word of military engineering. The basis of it was a defensive line established along the east bank of the Suez Canal (the Barlev Line), consisting of two zones 30-50 km deep. The first zone had two positions. The forward edge of the first position some 2-3 km deep ran directly along the steep banks of the Canal and along an embankment up to 20 m high. The position consisted of company and platoon strongpoints set up on threatening sectors along the prevailing heights as well as constructed permanent emplacements, dug-in tanks and ATGM [antitank guided missile]. The intervals between the strongpoints were covered with minefields, wire obstacles and camouflaged obstacles. The density of antitank

weapons on likely tank approaches was 10-12 tanks and 4-5 antitank weapons per kilometer of front.⁵

Some 12-15 km from the Canal lay the second position of the first defensive zone. Its strongpoints covered the roads to the mountain passes along which ran the second defensive zone which was also strongly organized in engineer terms. This was designed for the positioning of the operational reserves.

For the Egyptian troops, the Suez Canal itself was major natural obstacle (a width of 150-200 m and 12-15 m in depth). Along this the Israelis had established a system of underground storage facilities (200 tons each) with a highly inflammable mixture which they planned to pour on the water surface in the event that the enemy attempted to cross the water barrier.

The Israeli General Staff planned to sit it out behind the fortifications of the Barlev Line, using the Sinai Peninsula as a "buffer zone."

The offensive had been set by the Egyptian Command for 6 October. This was preceded by effective combat training for the Egyptian troops and this was carried out in the Nile Delta on terrain organized in engineer terms according to the type of enemy defenses. The subunits and units were trained in crossing the water obstacle without a pause and sealing off the strongpoints. Particular attention was paid to training the assault groups which were to be the first to cross the canal and ensure the success of the operation.

Great importance was given to achieving surprise in the combat operations. Work in planning the operation was carried out in strict secrecy. A narrow group of individuals was involved in working out the documents. Conversations concerning the preparations for the offensive were prohibited over communications equipment. It was prohibited for the commanders to visit the field to organize combat and conduct reconnaissance. In the aims of disinformation, rumors were spread that the troops were being prepared to repel a possible Israeli strike and conduct regular exercises in the Canal Zone. The regrouping and concentration of the troops which started 2 weeks prior to the going over to the offensive were carried out according to a schedule and were conducted at night in observing camouflage measures and radio silence. Firing positions were initially assumed by the artillery and air defenses. Three days prior to the operation the tank formations and units reached the forming-up places and the infantry during the night of 6 October.

Regardless of the camouflage measures initiated, Israeli and American intelligence agents who supplied the Israeli General Staff with military information were able to determine the move-up of the Egyptian formations and units to the front line. On 1 October, the troops in the Suez Canal Zone were put on combat alert and from 4 October a partial mobilization of reservists was declared in the nation. By 1000 hours on 6 October, when the Israeli Command had learned that at the end of the day the Egyptian troops would go over to the offensive, a universal mobilization was declared.⁶

At 1500 hours on the same day, the Egyptian troops began crossing the Suez Canal, conducting before this an hour-long artillery and air softening up. This was preceded by a strike of tactical unguided missiles against the enemy electronic warfare center in the area of Mount Gebel—Umm—Mahasa and the airfield at Meles. With the first artillery shelling of the strongpoints along the forward edge and the air strike against the targets of the first defensive zone, the personnel of the assault groups began the crossing. For making passageways through the earthworks along the east bank of the Canal, specially assigned weapons, tanks and SAU [self-propelled artillery mount] were employed in being set for direct laying. With the shifting of artillery fire deep in the Israeli defenses, the first echelon subunits of the infantry divisions rushed toward the opposite bank. The enemy,

without putting up serious resistance and without fighting surrendered the main portion of strongpoints and fortifications in the first position. It was not even able, as the defensive plan had envisaged, to release the burning fluid from the tanks into the Canal. All of this made it possible for the Egyptian troops with few losses to capture the divisional bridgeheads 3-5 km deep and then, having boosted the efforts with the second echelons of the infantry divisions, by the end of the day of 8 October, to combine them and establish an army bridgehead up to 10-12 km in depth.

In crossing the Canal, the infantry with light weapons crossed on boats, while the artillery and antiaircraft weapons crossed on ferries. In the earthen embankment on the eastern shore of the Canal, by explosives and using bulldozers and monitors, the combat engineers were able to make passageways. Some 10-12 passages were made for each first echelon division. Some 6 hours later, in the zone of advance of the 2d Army, four bridges had been put up and 8-12 hours later, three bridges in the zone of the 3d Army. The tank and mechanized divisions rushed across the water barrier over these to exploit the success.⁷ In the aim of confusing the enemy on the launching of the army's main thrust as well as the location of the operating bridge and ferry crossings, and for ensuring their survival, false crossings were erected.

For interdicting the arrival of enemy reserves on the passes in the enemy rear during the night of 7 October, three assault forces were landed each with a strength of up to a battalion. However, soon thereafter they were sealed off and several days later were destroyed or captured by Israeli troops.⁸ The mission was not carried out. During this time the Israelis were fighting hard to hold the advantageous lines and on individual sectors were conducting counterattacks in the aim of gaining time for the arrival of operational reserves and for establishing conditions to go over to a general counter-offensive. Thus, the counterattack initiated on 9 October against the right-flank divisions of the 2d Egyptian Army ended in failure. Here, the 190th Israeli Brigade was defeated and its commander captured.

Regardless of the successful execution of the breaching of the defensive zone, a lull set in in the fighting. The Egyptian troops halted the offensive by orders from the president. Foreign observers have assumed that in the given situation this decision was taken by A. Sadat out of political considerations and under pressure from the United States which did not want an Israeli defeat. Only on 14 October did the Egyptian Army Command decide to resume the offensive. The task was to complete the defeat of the opposing enemy and capture the line of the lateral road running 25-30 km to the east of the Suez Canal. Since the offensive was not properly organized and was conducted with only a portion of the forces, it was unsuccessful. The troops of the Egyptian Army advanced only 6-10 km and was halted by the fire of enemy ATGM, dug-in tanks and artillery. Moreover, they came under attack by Israeli aviation and fire support helicopters.

Having moved up operational reserves, the Israelis with the forces of up to 18 brigades, 9 of which were armored, in the morning of 15 October and with massed air support, went over to a counteroffensive, launching the main thrust against the 2d Egyptian Army on the Ismailiya sector. But the Egyptian antitank defenses of the subunits and formations dug in on the achieved lines and armed with the Soviet ATGM were insurmountable. In suffering losses, the enemy abandoned a frontal thrust and shifted the main efforts to defeating the right-flank army formations. On 16 October it had succeeded in squeezing the infantry brigade and in the area of Khamsa Station had broken through to the Great Bitter Lake, and with small forces had crossed it in the north and captured a bridgehead. During the next 2 days, the Israeli brigades continued to attack the left flank of the army, pressing its formations to the Canal. At the same time, the success of the assault detachment was furthered.

The attempt by the Egyptians by attacks of the adjacent flanks of the 2d and 3d Armies toward one another to push the enemy back from the lake and cut it off from the bridgehead was unsuccessful.

Having repulsed the counterattacks, the Israeli troops resumed their offensive, they pressed the right-flank formations of the 2d Army and by the end of 18 October had reached the Suez Canal to the north of the Great Bitter Lake, and had broadened the bridgehead up to 6 km along the front and up to 5 in depth, digging in on it. The Egyptian Command with the forces of a tank and a mechanized brigade endeavored to eliminate the bridgehead but the enemy, having repulsed the attacks, on 19 October went over to an offensive from it with the Israeli troops fanning out to the north, northwest and southwest. Here the tanks were employed in small groups (a tank company reinforced by motorized infantry subunits and ATGM on armored personnel carriers). They found weak points in the Egyptian defenses, they broke through into the rear, capturing and destroying the SAM, the artillery in firing positions, the command posts and rear facilities. In opposition to this, the Egyptian Command instead of launching a decisive thrust against the enemy, moved up troops to cover various sectors and committed them to battle piecemeal. In taking advantage of this, the Israelis by the end of the day of 19 October, had broadened the bridgehead to 15 km along the front and in depth.⁹

On the following day, the Egyptian troops launched a meeting attack from the north and south in the aim of defeating the Israeli troops on both banks of the Suez Canal. However, the counterstrike did not succeed.

In taking advantage of the confusion and slowness of actions of the Egyptians, the Israeli Command without impediment built up its forces on the bridgehead. By 21 October, it had succeeded in broadening it to 30 km along the front and 20 km in depth while continuing the offensive.¹⁰

The Egyptian troops on the bridgehead drove off the enemy attacks and firmly held the captured lines. However, as a whole, they were in a difficult situation. In this situation, the Egyptian government turned to the Soviet government with a request to immediately take measures to organize a cease-fire.

On 22 October, the UN Security Council adopted a resolution on the ceasing of military operations. The Egyptian Command immediately carried it out while the Israeli troops (the government had adopted the UN Resolution) continued to advance. On 24 and 25 October, they attacked Suez, breaking into its suburbs and by the end of the day of 25 October on the western bank of the Suez Canal captured a bridgehead 100 km along the front and 30 km in depth.¹¹ Under these conditions, only the decisive actions by the Soviet government forced Israel on 24 October to carry out the Security Council decision and halt combat. The process of separating the Egyptian and Israeli troops commenced.

What were the results of this war? Primarily, in the minds of the Arabs a sort of psychological barrier was overcome which had arisen as a result of the 1967 military defeat, when seemingly one could no longer find the forces to resist the strong and perfidious enemy, let alone deal it tangible blows.¹²

Having analyzed the combat actions in the course of the Arab-Israeli War of 1973, certain foreign military specialists concluded that they made a number of substantial changes in operational art and particularly in tactics. The time-tested strategic and tactical concepts were confirmed in the course of this conflict and were not repudiated or changed. The breaching of the Barlev Line demonstrated that victory in combat is achieved in close cooperation by all the armed services and combat arms while **the surprise of launching the attack** is, as before, the main factor which ensures the success of the first operations.

In the course of the fighting which was characterized by **the massed employment of tanks** and other combat equipment, the myth of the invincibility of the Israeli Army was dispelled.

A majority of the tanks belonging to the Egyptians was of Soviet production (T-54 and T-55). The combat experience showed that they possessed good combat qualities and could successfully fight the main types of U.S. and British tanks employed by Israel, including the M-60A tanks produced in the 1960s. However, the commanders did not always make sufficiently skillful use of the great strike force and maneuverability of the tanks for achieving decisive goals in the course of the offensive actions and for increasing the stability of the troops on the defensive. On the offensive the tanks were employed separately, without a concentration of efforts on the axes of the main thrusts while their cooperation with the other combat arms was organized poorly and sometimes was not organized at all. All of this led to a situation

where the Egyptian tank formations and units in the course of the fighting suffered heavy losses and often did not carry out the set tasks. The Egyptian commanders did not have a sufficiently good knowledge of Israeli tactics and which came down to "enticing" the tank units against positions which were strongly fortified in antitank terms.

As was pointed out by foreign specialists, many commanders, not having accurate data on the enemy, significantly exaggerated its strength and ahead of time positioned their tanks on the defensive, giving the initiative to the Israelis. Combat actions showed that the success of the tank troops was possible only with their massed employment on the axes of the main thrusts, in close cooperation with the motorized infantry, the artillery and engineer troops and with a dependable cover against air strikes.

The war confirmed the important role of the **air force**. The equipping of the Egyptian Air Force with modern equipment, the skills and moral-psychological training of the flight personnel did not permit the Israeli aviation from winning an absolute air supremacy, as had been the case in the 1967 war.

The tactics of Egyptian aviation was characterized by the employment of battle formations open along the front making it possible to quickly deploy for an attack as well as shift combat to a great altitude. The fire for effect, as a rule, was carried out from a short range: not more than 1,000 m for rockets and not more than 200 m for cannons.

The tactics of Israeli aviation did not undergo any major changes. Aviation made attacks successively. Initially its efforts were directed at destroying the radars of the air defense system, later the SAM positions and the fighter aviation airfields and then supporting the combat of the ground troops. The Israeli frequently employed old tactical procedures as well as the combat experience of American aviation in Vietnam.

According to the data of the foreign press, one of the characteristic features of combat was the employment of **ATGM from helicopters**. On the battalion-brigade level of the Israeli Army, a highly maneuverable antitank reserve was established consisting of two-four fire support helicopters. This was employed for destroying tanks which had driven into the defenses in cooperation with other weapons (tanks, artillery and ground ATGM). The helicopters were stationed in shelters a short distance away from the contact line of the troops and this ensured their appearance over the battlefield 4 or 5 minutes after the command was sent to carry out a battle task. The ATGM were launched from the helicopter against tanks from a distance of 2-3 km and from an altitude of 25-50 m.

Under the conditions of employing conventional types of weapons, particular importance was assumed by measures to **increase the survival of air force and air defense forces**. Combat experience showed that aircraft in shelters, the SAM systems and radars at positions well

organized in engineer terms virtually did not suffer from attack while the fighter-bombers of the Israeli Air Force suffered heavy losses from the fire of the antiaircraft missiles, the antiaircraft artillery and air defense fighters. Experience confirmed the advisability of locating the antiaircraft missile systems and antiaircraft batteries at shortened intervals ensuring their reciprocal coverage.

A weak point in the organizing of the combat of Egyptian air defenses was the poor cooperation of the ground air defense weapons with the fighters and fighter-bombers. This led to a situation where Egyptian aircraft and helicopters were often downed by their own portable SAM systems and by the fire of antiaircraft guns.

Reconnaissance in the Egyptian Armed Forces prior to the start of hostilities was carried out by observation, by the photographing of the forward edge, by aerial photography, frequently by deep reconnaissance groups, as well as by signals and electronic intelligence.

In the 2d Army along the entire bank of the Suez Canal, an observation network was established with a density of one observation post for every 1-1.5 km of front. Observation towers were built for observing deep in the enemy defenses. All the observation posts were connected by data collection and processing centers.

Operational reconnaissance was the weakest point in the system of reconnaissance measures. The commanders and staffs were not sufficiently concerned with the questions of organizing and conducting reconnaissance and tasks were not set promptly. The operational reconnaissance bodies operated passively and reconnaissance was not conducted at night. The data secured on the enemy were reported irregularly and with great delays.

From the experience of this war in the Near East, foreign specialists have concluded that the role of **electronic warfare** increased sharply in it both on the offensive and defensive. The conducting of effective electronic warfare in the course of combat was viewed as a prime task.

The establishing of assault troop groupings as well as the sufficient number of assault-landing and pontoon bridge units in the Egyptian Army and their extended training together with the combined-arms formations ensured the successful crossing of the Suez Canal. However, foreign military specialists, in analyzing the fighting in breaching the defenses on the Barlev line and broadening the captured bridgeheads on the east bank of the Suez Canal, have noted a number of shortcomings: poorly organized reconnaissance in the course of the fighting; the taking of decisions by the division and brigade commanders without a knowledge of the true position of the enemy, the friendly troops and adjacent units; the poor neutralization of enemy weapons, particularly antitank, which led to great losses in tanks and personnel; the lack of cooperation between the units and subunits of the combat arms; the lack of coordinated actions with adjacent units (there were clashes between friendly troops).

In the fighting the second echelon divisions were not employed for rapidly exploiting the offensive in the interior of the Sinai Peninsula for capturing the second defensive line without a pause. The slowness and indecisiveness of the Egyptians made it possible for the Israeli Command to reinforce the troop grouping ahead of the Egyptian Army's front and go over to active operations.

The experience of the war again confirmed that for exploiting an offensive, the prompt commitment of the second echelons and reserves to battle is of very important significance. This makes it possible in a short period of time to increase the force of the thrust by the first echelon units and increase the rate of advance for achieving the set goals.

On a basis of analyzing the course of the fighting, Western military specialists have noted the importance of the massing of forces on the sector of the main thrust. In their opinion, this principle of military art has maintained its significance in a modern war. One of the reasons for the failures of the Israeli troops in launching counterstrikes against the Egyptian groupings on the bridgeheads was the offensive conducted along a broad front. Only the concentration of the forces in the center of the Sinai Front made it possible for the Israeli troops to break Egyptian resistance, to cross the Canal and seize a bridgehead on its west bank.

Footnotes

1. FORCES ARMEES FRANCAISES No 30, 1975, p 46.
2. "Lokalnyye voyny: Istoriya i sovremennost" [Local Wars: History and Modern Times], Moscow, Voenizdat, 1981, p 155.
3. VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL No 11, 1974, pp 84-85.
4. OSTERREICHISCHE MILITARISCHE ZEITSCHRIFT No 6, 1973, p 479.
5. "Lokalnyye voyny: Istoriya..., " pp 154-155.
6. ARMED FORCES JOURNAL No 35, 1974, p 35.
7. TIME, 29 October 1973, pp 12-28.
8. WEHRKUNDE No 2, 1973, p 626.
9. "Lokalnyye voyny: Istoriya..., " p 159.
10. MILITARY REVIEW, March, 1974, p 28.
11. WEHRKUNDE No 2, 1973, p 624.
12. FORCES ARMEES FRANCAISES No 18, 1974, p 12.

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What the Ten-Volume Work Will Be

00010003i Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL in Russian No 10, Oct 88 (signed to press 23 Sep 88) pp 71-74

[Article, published under the heading "We Answer Questions," by Col R.A. Savushkin, doctor of historical sciences, professor: "What the Ten-Volume Work Will Be"]

[Text] A year has passed since the decision was taken to create the ten-volume work "Velikaya Otechestvennaya vojna sovetskogo naroda" [The Great Patriotic War of the Soviet People]. We have organized its editorial board, the editorial boards for the specific volumes and other subdivisions. The over-all plan is being tightened. The structure and outline plans of the individual volumes are being worked out. The search is underway for documents in the archives. The chapters of the first volumes are being written. The illustrations are being chosen and so forth.

What will the new work be like? This question is asked in their letters by persons of the most diverse professions and ages. Many discussions of this question can be found in the press. What can be said on this issue?

The Soviet people will be the main character, the main hero of the story. A people who have drained the cup of suffering, the bitterness of losses and the pain of disappointments. A hero people who did not fall on their knees and who did not bend in the harsh testing. The working people who were the architect and creator of victory.

The publication is designed for a broad range of readers. It will be essential to consider the age, profession, nationality and other features of the readers, to attract their interest, in other words, to make the work highly readable. It should be popular and scholarly, include elements of artistic prose and political affairs, and combine the imagery of historical narration with a strictness of theoretical exposition.

The chief principle in our work is truthfulness. Only the truth and nothing but the truth. The first six-volume publication "Istoriya Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny 1941-1945 gg." [History of the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945] was written in 1960-1965, during the period of the "thaw" which came after the 20th CPSU Congress. The enthusiasm of the authors as a result of the democratization process which had begun in society, the accessibility of a number of archives which threw open their doors to the scholars made it possible to treat many questions of history in a new light, to boldly describe the harm of Stalin's cult of personality, to write about the mistakes of the military political leadership, to force us to reflect over the reasons of the setbacks and more widely show the heroism of the Soviet people.

However, the spirit of Stalinism during those years had not yet been overcome, the historians were guided by old concepts and much remained under seal. The 12-volume "Istoriya vtoroy mirovoy voyny 1939-1945" [History of World War II of 1939-1945] in which a significant place was assigned to the Great Patriotic War was published in 1973-1982, in the years of stagnation. It took a step forward in treating the processes of armed combat but two steps backward in showing the negative role of Stalin's cult of personality and its consequences. The Achilles heel of this collective work was the notion imposed on the historians of the exceptional role of L. Brezhnev and those events in which he was involved. This led to a distorted treatment of a number of historical processes. The glorification addressed to an individual who was very unpopular with the people caused a nihilistic attitude to the work as a whole. Presently, everyone understands that the readers will accept the new ten-volume work only in the instance that there will be truth in its every line, the truth of facts, the truth of trends and the truth of the historical concept.

Truthful history is primarily scientific history. This is history based on the following:

- In the first place, on an effective scientific methodology and on the comprehensive use of the methods of a varying level of generalization (universal philosophy, general scientific, interdisciplinary, general sociological, general military, special as well as particular methods of examining specific problems);
- Secondly, on a well elaborated theory of those spheres of human social activity which have become the object of historical analysis, primarily the armed, economic, diplomatic, ideological and other types of struggle, on the structural and functional models of these spheres, and on a realization that without a good theory lying at the basis of the analysis and subsequent exposition (description) of past events, there can be no scientific history;
- Thirdly, on the policy of glasnost which creates a situation for working without forbidden subjects, shameful silences, rebukes of an intentional providing of "food for discussion by our ideological enemies," on a solid informational basis which presupposes primarily the opportunity to extensively draw on documents from all the existing archives without hiding important sources of information from the researchers and which might disclose supposedly harmful facts for us, on dependable, reliable statistics and so forth;
- Fourthly, on the high professionalism of the authors, on their ability to put into motion all that was listed above, on the close collaboration of the collectives of historians from various institutes involved in working out the work with the rights of coexecutors.

In principle, even now we possess many essential components for creating a truthful history, but the inertia of a series of trends from the years of stagnation still

impedes the complete realization of the opportunities opening up to us. We have all emerged from this stagnant past, we must all adapt, we must all think about how we can escape from customary stereotypes and at the same time avoid the attraction of sensationalism which is harmful to science. There are also difficulties of an organizational, personnel, methodological and informational nature. These are surmountable. More complicated will be the matter of the difficulties of a contextual nature.

There have been numerous arguments over the principles for constructing the work. The most diverse versions were proposed and they were all examined carefully and on a democratic basis. Considering the requests of the scholarly community and the proposals made by a majority of the GRK [Main Editorial Commission] members, it was decided to use the following principles as the basis. The first volume will be devoted to the prehistory of the war and the tenth to the results and social consequences as well as the lessons of the war. The dividing up of the remaining volumes will be done on a basis of the scientific periodization adopted in the historical literature and the correctness of which has been confirmed by the research of several generations of historians: the first period (three campaigns) from 22 June 1941 through 18 June 1942, the second (two campaigns) from 19 November 1942 until the end of December 1943, the third (three campaigns) from the start of January 1944 through 9 May 1945. A review of the Soviet-Japanese War is to be carried out within the concluding period of World War II.

Each volume, beginning with the second and ending with the eighth, will cover events on the front, in the rear and in the world within chronological limits of one or another campaign on the Soviet-German Front, the main front of World War II. The ninth volume will examine two brief but very eventful campaigns in Europe and the Far East. The tentative titles of the volumes and their chronological limits are as follows: 1. On the eve (the 1930s-1940s); 2. The checking of the Blitzkrieg (June-December 1941); 3. The first victory (December 1941-April 1942); 4. New testings (May-November 1942); 5. The turning point (November 1942-March 1943); 6. The conclusion of the turning point (April-December 1943); 7. Beyond the frontier (January-May 1944); 8. Liberation (June-December 1944); 9. Finale (January-September 1945); 10. The victor people.

For the second-ninth volumes, a unified structure has been proposed including four parts of three or four chapters each. The first two parts will examine the questions of preparing and conducting defensive and offensive operations in one or another campaign. The necessity of establishing two parts for armed combat has been caused by the large volume of information reflecting the processes of armed combat and the natural qualitative division of each of the campaigns examined in the second-eighth volumes into two unique stages (for example, in the second volume, the initial period of the

war and the subsequent defensive operations, and in the third volume, the counteroffensive at Moscow and the general offensive by the Soviet troops in the winter of 1941-1942 and the spring of 1942 and so forth). In the tenth volume, one chapter will be assigned to each of the campaigns.

The division of the first and second parts into chapters is based on the problem-chronological principle of organization. The main chapters will disclose the events of the campaign by individual strategic sectors (one strategic sector for each chapter) in chronological succession. In each volume in the second part, there will be chapters devoted to the movement of all the people in the enemy rear and to the independent actions of the Armed Services.

In the third part of each of the eight volumes (from the second through the ninth), there are plans to examine the questions of the rear of the Soviet nation in comparison with the state of the rear services of Nazi Germany. Among the typical chapters of this part are the chapters devoted to the questions of the ideological and organizational activities of the Communist Party, the functioning of the Soviet state under wartime conditions, the state and development of the military economy, the status of the workers, the heroism of the Soviet workers, the aid from all the people to the front and so forth. In the chapters and sections of the first three parts of each volume, they will take up the activities of the NKVD [People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs] and NKGB [People's Commissariat of State Security] bodies and troops.

The last, four parts of the volumes present to the readers a global picture of the world engulfed in war. Here they will examine the questions of the foreign policy of the CPSU and the Soviet government, the formation of the anti-Hitler coalition and the activities of its members, military operations in the theaters of World War II, the growth of the Resistance Movement in the Nazi-occupied territories and the forms of struggle of its participants, the state of the bloc of fascist states and its decline from campaign to campaign and so forth.

Work on the over-all concept and architectonics of the work is continuing. We are receiving letters with critical comments and proposals. Everything rational will be reflected in the structure and outline plans of the appropriate volumes.

There have been numerous difficulties in shaping the over-all concept of such spheres as foreign and domestic policy, the economy, ideology and so forth. The elaboration of the work "Velikaya Otechestvennaya voyna sovetskogo naroda" is running ahead of fundamental party history research, the work of social scientists in various areas the ideas of whom could be employed by the authors of the ten-volume work. In this situation, additional work must be put in and in a number of instances a risk taken: to use hypotheses which now seem

promising but have not been sufficiently tested, to rely on unestablished views, to employ imperfect models, to encounter opposing opinions and so forth. The decisive role in overcoming this difficulty, in all probability, will be played by the correct choice of the authors, establishing for them an atmosphere favorable for creativity and consideration of opinions on one or another question by a large number of specialists. There are many problems in this regard.

Letters to the editors frequently raise the question of who is heading and organizing the elaboration of the ten-volume work and who is carrying out the ideas and plans.

By the Decree of the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee of 13 August 1978, the elaboration of the ten-volume work has been entrusted to the USSR Ministry of Defense, the USSR Academy of Sciences and the Marxism-Leninism Institute Under the CPSU Central Committee.

Four institutes have been assigned as coexecutors of the work. In September, their functions were defined. The **Military History Institute** is to carry out scientific-organizational and scientific-editorial functions and is responsible for the treatment of the problems related to the conduct of armed combat. The **Marxism-Leninism Institute Under the CPSU Central Committee** is to treat the problems of the activities of the VKP(b) [All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik)], the international communist and workers movement in the struggle for peace against fascism on the eve and during the war. The **USSR History Institute of the USSR Academy of Sciences** is to work out the economic, political and ideological problems of the history of the Soviet state on the eve and during the Great Patriotic War. The **Institute of Universal History of the USSR Academy of Sciences** is to treat the economic, political and ideological problems in the history of the foreign countries during the period preceding the war and in the course of it.

Subsequent to this, at a session held on 5 November 1987, the Bureau of the History Department of the USSR Academy of Sciences adopted a decree which emphasized the need for the main scientific institutions of the History Department of the USSR Academy of Sciences—the institutes of USSR history, universal history as well as Slavic, Balkan and eastern studies, to consider work on the ten-volume work as a priority. Subsequently, it has been proposed that in addition to the coexecutor institutes, the work involved to a maximum degree co-workers from the higher military and civilian institutions of learning, scientists, writers, current affairs writers as well as all strata of the population of our country as well as scientists from foreign countries.

All the work is to be directed by the GRK headed by the GRK Chairman, the USSR Minister of Defense, Army Gen D.T. Yazov. Among his six deputies are the chief of

the General Staff of the Armed Forces, the commander-in-chief of the Joint Armed Forces of the Warsaw Pact States, the chief of the Main Political Directorate of the Soviet Army and Navy, the vice-president of the USSR Academy of Sciences, the director of the Marxism-Leninism Institute Under the CPSU Central Committee and the chief of the Military History Institute.

Among the remaining 30 members of the commission, 13 persons are representatives of the USSR Armed Forces. They are chiefly the deputy ministers of defense, the commanders-in-chief of the Armed Services, the chiefs of the leading military academies and the chief of the Directorate of the Military Izdatelstvo of the Ministry of Defense. From the USSR Academy of Sciences there are 13 persons (directors of the institutes of the USSR Academy of Sciences, chiefly the History Department, the deputy directors and the sector heads). It includes the chief of the Main Archival Directorate Under the USSR Council of Ministers, the chief of the USSR State Committee for Statistics, the chairman of the Novosti Press Agency and the chairman of the All-Union War and Labor Veterans Council. As can be seen, the GRK includes officials who head major scientific and archival centers of the nation, prominent scholars concerned with the questions of history in one or another area. Among them are nine academicians and three corresponding members of the USSR Academy of Sciences and several doctors of sciences.

For carrying out scientific research, organizational and editorial tasks under the Military History Institute, they have organized an editorial staff for the work "Velikaya Otechestvennaya vojna sovetskogo naroda." Within it are the editorial staffs of five volumes, a scientific-supervisory editorial staff and a whole series of scientific and technical subdivisions. Well-trained specialists are to be involved in its work. Even now 80 percent of the co-workers are doctors and candidates of sciences. They are all endeavoring to justify the trust shown and create a work meeting the highest demands.

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On Paths of Restructuring

00010003j Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY
ZHURNAL in Russian No 10, Oct 88 (signed to press
23 Sep 88) pp 74-77

[Article by Col R.M. Portugalskiy, doctor of historical sciences; Col L.A. Zaytsev: "On the Paths of Restructuring (On Improving Military History Training of Students and Officer Candidates)"]

[Text] The collective of the Chair of the History of Military Art at the Military Academy imeni M.V. Frunze for a number of years has been searching for an optimum curriculum for its discipline. At present, the chair has worked out a training program which significantly differs from the previous one. It, in particular, provides for

a transition from studying the main events of the previous wars in a chronological order to an analysis of the most important problems of military art in their historical relationship employing concrete historical material, particularly the experience of world and local wars of recent decades. Among such problems we put the reasons for various setbacks, mistakes and errors in previous wars, ensuring the stability and activeness of the defenses, achieving surprise, the effectiveness of fire damage to the enemy, continuous troop command and control in an operation and battle, the organization and conduct of military operations under special conditions and a number of others. The accent has been strengthened on studying armed combat as a two-sided process and showing the sources of the courage and heroism of the Soviet soldiers on the battlefield.

The program makes it possible to bring the content of the course of history on military art closer to the academy subjects of tactics and operational art with the simultaneous mastery of the methods of organizing and conducting military history work in the troops. This task is carried out primarily by coordinating the military history subjects with the basic subject of general tactics and operational art. The study of defensive combat tactics under present-day conditions, for example, is carried out almost in parallel with an analysis of the experience of organizing and conducting the defensive in World War I, the Great Patriotic War and the local wars of recent decades. A special lecture is given to the students on the methods of military history work.

More study time is being given to studying the experience of the local wars of the 1960s through the 1980s, the theory of Soviet military art during the postwar years, particularly such problems as ensuring the stability of the defenses, ensuring dependable fire damage to the enemy, surprise and a number of others. Characteristically, these questions will be taken up not only in lectures but also in seminars and in the course of group exercises where they will analyze the combat actions of formations and units in Vietnam and other regions.

In the new program the lecture course has been shortened (by 28-33 percent) and at the same time the amount of time increased on more active types of exercises (seminars by 10 percent, group exercises and field trips by 40 percent). We have also introduced such forms of study as independent work of the students under the leadership of the instructor, practical exercises, colloquiums and exams. At the seminars they bring up subjects relating to the military-political results of the Great Patriotic War, the problems of improving the art of employing forces on the defensive and offensive in world and local wars, as well as on the views of the postwar years. In the practical exercises, the students study the works of the founders of Marxism-Leninism on the development patterns of military art, and the most important documents of Headquarters Supreme High Command and the USSR People's Commissariat of Defense which appeared during the years of the Great

Patriotic War. Independently under the leadership of the instructor the trainees examine the main operations of World War II. Colloquiums are organized on the most important of these. In the first course they give a quiz and in the subsequent ones an exam.

Finally, it is planned to significantly increase the time (by 6-10-fold) on studying the problems of the history of military art considering the specialty and specialization of the students (for intelligence subjects, the development of the border and interior troops, an analysis of the experience of employing airborne troops, the history of electronic warfare and so forth). For this purpose, special lectures, seminars, group exercises and military history field trips are planned.

The version of the program worked out includes seven sections and is divided into two parts. The first which has three sections starts with an introductory course which examines the content of the subject, the tasks and forms of its mastery (lecture and practical exercise). The second section (22 training hours) will make it possible to reinforce the knowledge of the students on the main stages in the development of military art from the time of its genesis until our own days. The purpose of the third section is to help the students detect the most important factors which have influenced the development of military art, to master the most significant changes which have occurred in the organization of the troops, in equipment and armament of the armies in the major nations of the world and detect their reasons and relationship with the nature of armed combat.

The last four sections comprise the second, main part of the training program. They include the subject of the history of the development of operational art and the tactics of combined-arms combat. Thus, in the section devoted to improving the tactics of offensive combat, there are nine lectures (the tactics of offensive combat in World War I, the essence of the tactics of combat in depth in the interwar years, offensive combat during the years of the Great Patriotic War, the employment of strategem in combat, the organization and conduct of combat under special conditions, improving troop command in combat, new features in the tactics of offensive combat in local wars and the postwar years), five group exercises (on the experience of the formations and units participating in the counteroffensive at Moscow, Stalingrad, in the Belgorod-Kharkov, Belorussian, Iasi-Kishinev and Berlin Operations), a practical exercise and four seminars.

Here it is important to consider that the students master a portion of these questions independently under the leadership of the instructor (for which six study hours have been assigned in the second section), as well as during independent study (20 hours). Many problems in the organization and conduct of combat in previous wars are studied by them in the programs of other disciplines and these include, in particular, such subjects as an offensive on the move (from the experience of the

combat actions of the 10th Army in the Moscow counteroffensive), breaching enemy defenses and exploiting the success in the operational depth (from the example of the participation of the 5th Tank Army in the counteroffensive at Stalingrad and a number of field forces in the Belorussian, Vistula-Oder, Berlin and Khingan-Mukden Operations). Moreover, there are plans for the students to view documentary training films on the most important operations of the Great Patriotic War and certain local wars (10 hours as an elective), and a visit to the museums of the Armed Forces (4 hours), the holding of military history and reader conferences as well as other measures making it possible to improve the military history training of the students.

Also recommended for the students is literature for independent study. The list of this is found in the plans of the seminars, group exercises and other types of exercises. These include military history works and memoirs. A portion of the students is to be involved in the activities of the military-scientific society under the chair, they write abstracts and competitive works on the history of military art. Here also the students gain the skills of public speaking on military history themes, working out reviews and articles, references and teaching aids. They are involved in the activities of the chair council, and so-called "roundtable" talks are held with them during which answers are given to posed questions. The questioning of the students also helps improve the training process.

As a result, we feel, the designated program opens up a real opportunity for the students to thoroughly master the military art of the past, to draw valid conclusions for modern military affairs, to understand the patterns of armed combat as a whole and an operation and combat in particular, to point out mistakes occurring under the specific conditions of combat actuality and to determine the importance of combat experience for their own practical activities, for the training and indoctrination of the personnel.

At the same time the changeover to the proposed program has entailed definite difficulties. There are various reasons for these. The main one is seen in the fact that the officers admitted to the academy have little knowledge of military history. In order to improve the military history training of the officer candidates it is advisable to increase the amount of time for studying military history in the higher military schools as well as improve the procedures for teaching it. A successful solution to this problem will be aided by appointing to positions of school instructors the graduates of the military historians group of the Military Academy imeni M.V. Frunze. It would be useful to work out for them, under the leadership of the Main Directorate of Institutions of Higher Learning Under the Ministry of Defense procedural aids as well as increase the activities of the military scientific societies in the area of military history.

It is important to introduce in the academies and admission exam on military history. This, on the one hand, would encourage the candidates independently, using

textbooks and military history literature, to regain knowledge on military history and, on the other, will create a firm basis for the study of the history of military art in the academy.

The physical plant for training and indoctrinating the students and officer candidates could be improved by the centralized publishing of diagrams, teaching aids, film strips for the military academies and schools on the history of military art (military history), documentary training films on the main subjects of the course, textbooks which conform to the new programs, and procedural teaching materials to help the instructors of the superior military schools as well as the employment of modern teaching equipment, including computers.

There are numerous opportunities for further increasing the role of military history work in the troops and the military schools. These questions, we feel, should be more fully reflected in the command training plans, as well as the independent work of officer personnel. The need has arisen for publishing an aid on the methods of organizing and conducting military history work in the Armed Forces. It would be beneficial to resume in the troops and military schools the military history field trips to the sites of previous battles and engagements (particularly where local conditions permit this and significant materials and time are not required). In representing a range of practical exercises in the field, these help to deepen military history knowledge, to improve field skills, and to broaden the operational-tactical viewpoint of the students, the officer candidates and all officer personnel.

It would also be beneficial to organize a permanent exchange of experience in military history work and hold annual conferences for the instructors of military history at military schools, the history of military art in the military academies, military historians of scientific institutions and the officers of the district staffs responsible for the assigned area. A thorough study by the faculty of the experience of teaching military history in the socialist-camp armies would also be of undoubted benefit. All of this will make it possible to improve the military history training of command personnel and will help to increase the combat readiness of the troops.

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XIII International Colloquium on Military History
00010003k Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY
ZHURNAL in Russian No 10, Oct 88 (signed to press
23 Sep 88) pp 83-84

[Article by Capt 1st Rank (Ret) I.A. Amosov: "XIII International Colloquium on Military History"]

[Text] From 31 May through 4 June 1988, the XIII International Colloquium on Military History was held in Helsinki, Finland. Such scientific forums where military

historians of various countries can meet are held annually by the International Commission on Comparative Military History (ICMH). The previous 12th Colloquium was held in 1987 in Athens, Greece.

The 13th Colloquium was attended by over 150 military historians from 26 countries. The organizer of the colloquium was the Finnish Commission for Military History and was the largest delegation (24 persons). Participating in the work of the colloquium were delegations from the United States, France, Italy, Sweden and other countries. The socialist countries were represented by scientists from the GDR, Hungary, Poland, Romania and China. The Soviet delegation included the Chief of the Military History Institute, Doctor of Philosophical Sciences, Professor, Col Gen D.A. Volkogonov, and the Senior Science Associate at the institute, I.A. Amosov.

The international colloquium was a noteworthy event in the scientific life of the Finnish capital. It was held under the patronage of the nation's president who sent a welcoming telegram. The opening of the colloquium was attended by the minister of education and the chief of the Main Staff of the Finnish Defensive Forces with the minister of defense participating in the closing ceremony.

The colloquium was held in two sections on the subjects: "The Period of Transition and Development Prospects of Tactics From the Mid-18th to the Beginning of the 19th Centuries" and "The Influence of the Information of Political and Military Intelligence of the Superior Command on the Strategic and Operational Decisions in Europe in World War II." A total of 39 papers were given. The Soviet participants gave scientific papers on troop tactics in the Battle of Borodino and the influence partisan intelligence reports on the operations of the Great Patriotic War. In addition, Gen D.A. Volkogonov gave an extended commentary in a discussion of the paper by the Israeli representative, M. Meisel "Stalin Caught by Surprise: A Review of Existing Materials" and which an assessment was given of events related to the start of the war. The papers and speeches by the members of the Soviet delegation in the course of the discussion caused lively interest among the colloquium participants. Questions were asked on restructuring in the Soviet Union and its impact on historical science as well as about works being carried out by the Military History Institute.

The interest shown by foreign military historians in the questions of the participation of the Soviet Union in World War II can be seen from the fact that in addition to the report by M. Meisel, five other scientific papers concerned events related to this question: "Assessing the Position of the Soviet Union in Germany's Planning of the Offensive Against Stalingrad and the Caucasus in 1942" (B. Wegner, FRG); "The Influence of the Incorrect Assessment of the Situation by the German Military Command on the Defeat of Army Group Center on the Soviet-German Front in the Summer of 1942" (P.

Heider, GDR); "The Underestimation of Previous Meteorological Data as an Important Factor in the Defeat of the German Army in the Battle of Moscow" (E. Neiman, Denmark); "The Influence of the Information of Finnish Military Intelligence and Its Assessments on Finland's Taking of Decisions in the Course of World War II" (R. Heiskanen, Finland); "The Influence of Intelligence Information in 1943-1944 for Romania's Decision to Join the War Against Germany" (I. Ceause-scu, Romania).

One of the sessions was held in Sveaborg Fortress where the participants became familiar with its history. After the end of the colloquium, a 2-day field trip was held to the commemorative historical places in the nation with the visiting of the museums of the combat arms and formations.

During the work of the colloquium, a session was held of the Bureau of the International Commission on Military History which discussed the procedure for work at the XIV International Colloquium in Paris in 1989 and the organizing of a conference on military history within the XVII International Congress of Historical Sciences in Madrid in 1990.

The participation of Soviet representatives in the work of a prestigious international colloquium made it possible not only to present scientific papers but also explain in speeches in the course of the debate as well as in personal conversations with foreign scientists the principles of new thinking in Soviet historical science, to show the true significance and role of the Soviet Union its Army and Navy in World War II and the purpose of the Soviet Armed Forces in modern days, as well as become acquainted with the views of scientists from Western countries on the events of World War II.

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Once Again on Price of Victory

00010003L Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY
ZHURNAL in Russian No 10, Oct 88 (signed to press
23 Sep 88) pp 89-94

[Letter to the Editors by V.M. Perepelitsyn from Lvov:
"Once Again on the Price of Victory"]

[Text] [Introduction] I would request that you publish in the journal the offered letter which I have entitled "Once Again on the Price of Victory." It is a well-reasoned, critical reply to articles which have appeared recently in LITERATURNAYA GAZETA [LG] in which under the pretext of a "truthful word about the war," the events of the Great Patriotic War have been distorted and the heroic past of the Soviet people and their Armed Forces has been styled a lie, falsification, "legends and myths." The letter analyzes the following articles:

—V. Shaposhnikov, "The Price of Victory," LG, 22 June 1988;

—A speech by V. Astafyev at a conference "Urgent Problems of Historical Science and Literature," LG, 18 May 1988;

—I.A. Belov, "Was It Really a 'Success'?" LG, 13 July 1988. [End of Introduction]

The review published on 22 June 1988 in LITERATURNAYA GAZETA of articles in the May journals devoted to a military issue ("The Price of Victory") has created the impression that its author V. Shaposhnikov, having assumed for himself and certain other writers, in his words, "the mission of the seekers and broadcasters of the truth," has set out to prove the lack of talent in the leadership of our troops during the years of the Great Patriotic War, as a consequence of which the victory in the battles was achieved solely due to the great numerical superiority over the enemy and at a price of uncounted sacrifices. The historical truth proven by the entire course and outcome of World War II, by the evidence of its participants and by numerous postwar studies that the victory in the engagements against the Nazi troops was achieved due to the superiority of our military art, combat equipment and the heroism of the Soviet soldiers, is declared to be a "lie, falsification...and historical 'legends and myths' which have for so long befuddled our heads...."

Instead of a critical analysis of the May publications devoted to the question of the war, the author employs extensive excerpts from them to reassess the entire history of the Great Patriotic War and for establishing his own views about victory. The most reliable assessment of the results of the war, the "true word about the war," in the opinion of the review's author, is to be found in a speech by V. Astafyev at a conference on "Urgent Questions of Historical Science and Literature" (LG, 18 May 1988), from which the excerpt is quoted: "We simply did not know how to fight. And we ended the war without knowing how to fight. We shed our blood and we covered the enemy with our corpses." For confirmation, it is proposed that a look be taken at the maps of combat operations during the war years. It is hard to say what maps the respected writer was looking at or through what glasses for him to say that on all the fronts from 1941 through 1944, "nine of our armies were fighting against two or three enemy armies. And this was the case over the entire war." As a former frontline veteran, the writer V. Astafyev should have known that the German armies did not have a definite TOE and that in terms of the number of personnel they often surpassed our combined-arms armies by 4-5-fold (for example, the 6th Army at Stalingrad). For this reason the number of armies participating in the engagements cannot be used as a criterion for the balance of forces of the sides.

For the lack of documentary data to confirm the idea the review quotes numerous excerpts from artistic works: "This documentary evidence...is largely matched by artistic works...." The individual facts described in the stories are declared to be typical of the entire war and the

quoted "documentary evidence," as a rule, is a personal opinion about events of the war or a description of these events by individuals who did not take a direct part in them. The assertion that for achieving victory "we...covered the enemies with our corpses," is backed up by a clear juggling of facts and all the human losses of our country are compared with the German troop losses on the Eastern Front. Here the fact is overlooked or, more accurately, disputed that one-half of the 20 million Soviet people died not in combat but were the victims of the Nazi death camps, the punitive operations and the bombings of peaceful population points. Our nation did not carry out such actions against the German population and prisoners of war.

Let us see how these and other assertions of the review's author conform to the documentary sources.

Since the author of the review rejects or disputes the reliability of publications concerning the war in our press of recent years, let us turn to foreign sources. Let us use the work by a group of German authors "Mirovaya voyna 1939-1945 gody" [The World War of 1939-1945] (translated from the German by A.A. Vysokovskiy and A.I. Dyakonov, Moscow, Izd-vo Inostr. Lit-ry, 1957).¹ It was compiled with the participation of seven generals, one admiral and three officers holding high positions in the former Nazi Wehrmacht, and they cannot be suspected of a desire to extol the valor of the Red Army which routed the Nazi hordes and the military art of its command. The description of the war's events is based upon factual material, including the use of the archives of the German Supreme High Command and the General Staff as well as published research of other authors. All the subsequent quotations with the indication of the pages have been taken from this book.

The miscalculations of Stalin in assessing the military-political situation on the eve of the war and the related absence of a directive to promptly alert the troops of the border districts brought the Soviet Armed Forces in the first year of the war to the brink of disaster. However, in this tragic period for the motherland, the actions of our soldiers, from the evidence of the book's authors, were marked by steadfastness and heroism. In the book written by our former enemies, the reader will not find confirmation for the monstrous accusation by V. Shaposhnikov that "senseless cruelty" was often the mark "of our own petty tyrant commanders who drove the men to slaughter who mercilessly flung them in thousands into the meat grinder of war in the dull hope that by very 'numbers' the meat grinder would become plugged and stop." There was no need for our commanders to "drive" the Soviet soldiers into battle against the enemy. This can be seen from the description which was given to the Soviet soldiers by their former enemy: "...The soldierly qualities of the Russian soldier, particularly his discipline and the capacity to fight without paying any attention to enemy fire and his own losses, his hardiness in enduring the hardships and burdens of war, were, beyond any doubt, very high" (p 153).

In describing the initial period of the war, there is constant emphasis on the stubborn resistance of our troops and the desire of their command to protect the personnel against unjustified losses: "...As a result of the stubborn resistance of the Russians in the very first days of the fighting, the German troops suffered casualties and losses of equipment which were significantly higher than the losses known to them from the experience of the campaigns in Poland and in the West" (p 163). "In critically assessing now the border engagements in Russia, it can be concluded that only Army Group Center was able to achieve successes which even from the operational viewpoint appear major.... Army Groups North and South advanced, as a rule, squeezing the enemy which skillfully employed a maneuvering defense and on their fronts no opportunities could be seen for launching decisive strikes" (pp 163-164).

The balance of forces in the first years of the war also did not permit the Soviet Command for the sake of success not to consider its losses, and our troops did not even have an opportunity to create a numerical superiority even in individual operations.

According to the data of the German General Staff, as of 4 August 1941, "the total number of servicemen in the German Armed Forces was 7,331,000 men...." (p 510). This does not include the troops of Romania, Hungary, Finland as well as the 8th Italian Army which were fighting alongside the Germans on the territory of our nation. The total size of the Nazi invasion army was around 5.5 million men. The data of German intelligence on the Soviet troops: "...The number and battle-worthiness of the Russian Army were determined comparatively accurately. It had 225 formations and numbered 4 million men. Around 40 formations were in the Asiatic part of Russia...." (p 153). That is, our troops positioned over the enormous territory from the Western Frontier to the Urals numbered just around 3.3 million men. In describing the command, it is pointed out that "at first the inferior and middle levels of the Russian command were significantly inferior to the German in terms of tactical skills.... The troops and command personnel of the Russians at the outset of the war fought much better on the defensive. On the defensive they, as a rule, lacked flexibility in the control of the troops on the battlefield and cooperation between the combat arms" (p 153). As combat experience was gained, our troops began to fight better on the offensive than did the Germans. Here is how the German authors describe the actions of Soviet troops on the offensive: "The Russians began an offensive usually with strong assaults launched along a broad front in the aim of feeling out weak points in the enemy defenses. These thrusts had, in addition, another purpose and namely to mislead the enemy on the true axis of the main thrust, to tie down its forces and disclose the fire plan for the heavy weapons of the defending troops. A Russian assault was always preceded by strong concentrated fire of very large forces of artillery and heavy infantry weapons, while the Russian aviation at this time launched its own strikes against discovered artillery firing positions.

"In using this fire and air support, the infantry escorted by close support tanks...went over to the attack and literally gnawed through the enemy defenses. When a breakthrough was noticed at some point, mobile forces were committed to battle. These were to broaden the breakthrough and, having secured their flanks and without paying attention to the fighting continuing on the main defensive zone, push deeply into the enemy rear" (pp 153-154).

Even a man who has little knowledge of military affairs would understand that it is a question of the apex of military art and also that victory was achieved not by the number of soldiers but by ability and the extensive use of combat equipment. The described method of advance led, as a rule, to the achieving of the set goal, since, in the opinion of the book's authors, the conditions required for the "successful defensive in this instance," "for the prompt elimination of the inevitable initial success of the Russians before it grew into a major danger...were, unfortunately, very rarely observed" (p 154).

Our troops did have superiority in forces, sometimes a multiple one, on the sector of the main thrusts as without this it was impossible to achieve victory in an offensive. However, in order to create such a superiority without being noticed by the enemy, with a general equality or a slight excess of our forces, it required a superiority in military art.

The able and effective execution of offensive operations by the Soviet troops is confirmed in describing the main engagements during the war years. Due to the fact that the article reveals the author's attitude toward the Finnish troops as "a clever, calculating and perfidious enemy" which simply destroyed our crack detachments, I will give an excerpt from the description of Lt Gen (Ret) Ditmar of the fighting of the German-Finnish troops. "In the autumn of 1943, in front of the Finnish and German troops which numbered around 550,000 men and were in superior condition were Russian forces which did not exceed 270,000 men (p 143). And these excellent forces did not carry out an offensive. Subsequently, events developed as follows. "The beginning of 1944 brought a major defeat to Army Group North" (p 143). "On 9 June 1944, quite unexpectedly, strong Russian forces went over to the offensive on the Karelian Isthmus. As a result of hours-long heavy artillery shelling and massed strikes by large ground attack formations, the first defensive zone of the Finns was breached to the entire depth on a narrow sector of the front.... The losses of the Finns were enormous. Vyborg, the symbol of victory in 1941, had to be surrendered" (p 144). Note that there is not even any mention of infantry actions and the infantry has been given a secondary role.

In the engagements which ensured a fundamental change in the war, we had forces which were approximately equal to the German in terms of numbers or even somewhat less.

The former Nazi military leaders thus characterized the forces of the sides at Moscow: "Moscow was now declared the most important target of the offensive, and in line with this Army Group Center was reinforced with all forces available on the Eastern Front" (p 173). "The troops were very heavily saturated with equipment. The panzer and artillery units and formations had been brought fully up to strength" (p 177). "That the Russian troops could go over to a decisive offensive at Moscow was considered improbable.... The Germans could not conceive that the Russians could concentrate any new significant forces here after their seemingly final collapse" (p 475).

In describing the encirclement of the German troops at Stalingrad, no mention is made of our superiority in forces. On the contrary, the authors felt that the Germans had sufficient forces for countering our troops. For example, on the main flank, the left: "As a matter of fact, these 30 divisions should have been fully sufficient to hold the 400-km front. However, regardless of all the efforts, it was not possible to sufficiently strengthen the combat might of the allied troops" (p 197).

Here is the final assessment of the state of the troops and Soviet military art after the engagements at Stalingrad and on the Don: "The destruction of the 6th German Army at Stalingrad, the defeat of the allied armies on the Don together with the enormous losses in personnel and equipment in the Caucasus and on the great bend in the Don had a negative effect not only on the battleworthiness of the German and allied troops but also on the attitude of the peoples in Germany, Italy, Hungary and Romania. Among the Russians the results of this fighting caused an enormous upsurge which led to a strengthening of their economy, to the growth and strengthening of their armed forces, and to even greater boldness and flexibility in their operational plans and, finally, to a strengthening of the morale of all the Soviet people" (p 208)—(emphasis mine).

Proof of the complete hopelessness of the German Command when confronted with the might of our troops and Soviet military art can be seen in the following excerpt from the section devoted to the results of military operations in 1943: "The last attempt by the Germans to again capture initiative in the East collapsed strikingly quickly in the Kursk area. In the subsequent offensive operations during the summer and autumn, the Russian Army demonstrated its high fighting qualities and showed that it possessed not only significant human reserves but also excellent military equipment" (pp 222-223).

The author of the review doubts the advisability of the storming of Berlin, referring to the "special opinion" of Gen A.V. Gorbatov voiced in a private conversation (OGONEK No 20, 1988) and for some reason called a "documentary piece of evidence": "...The city was caught in a ring and it would have surrendered in a week or two...." The excerpts quoted below from the book by

the German authors prove the falaciousness of such views. "Hitler decisively rejected all proposals by the persons surrounding him to abandon Berlin.... The collapse of his hopes...aroused in him a fanatic desire to turn the ruins of the German capital which numbered some 4 million inhabitants into a gigantic grave" (p 268). "...Hitler during his last days, seeing the inevitability of his death, openly discarded the mask and showed his true face and with the cynicism of a sadist beset by a mood of destruction, sacrificed in a senseless fight for a destroyed regime both human and material resources. Again he and his propaganda minister succeeded with the aid of false promises in driving thousands of people into battle.... Its defenders (the defenders of Berlin.—Author) had not lost hope that the German armies coming to their aid and possibly the Western Allies—in the event that these armies were routed—would soon enter the city...." (p 269). This truly documentary evidence shows that the blockading of the major center of resistance by the German troops in the capital of the Reich headed by the Fuhrer in expectation that "he himself would surrender," would have substantially lengthened the time of surrender by Germany and would have led to significantly greater losses of our troops as well as to innumerable victims among the peaceful residents of Berlin. In this instance unpredictable political consequences could not be excluded.

Since V. Shaposhnikov belittles the "cloudy strategic thinking of the Soviet military leaders," considering it among "legends and myths," we might point out that he was not alone in this and recall the eloquent evidence of Field Mar von Paulus who led the German troops advancing against Stalingrad. At the Nuremburg Trial, where Paulus was a witness, the defense attorney for Goring asked him whether it was true that during the days when his fatherland was in a state of war against the Soviet Union, he gave a lecture on strategy in the superior military academy of the Russians? Paulus replied in the negative.

A significant portion of the review in LG is devoted to debunking the partisan movement employing "documentary evidence" drawn from...artistic works. Having mentioned casually the "traditional exalted attitude toward the partisans and underground members," the author here declares that their heroism and sacred hate for the enemy did not have any essential bearing on the success of the fight against the enemy and proposes "that serious thought be given to the vain sacrifices and losses caused in this 'secret' area of the war." The author clearly confuses the qualities required for a regular serviceman or intelligence agent with the qualities inherent to a member of the partisan movement, when he asserts that "neither patriotism, nor combat enthusiasm nor sacred hate for the enemy even altogether could replace the essential quality required by each partisan and underground member—professionalism." Here, in the author's opinion, is the lamentable result of the partisan movement: "Numerous failures of the underground groups, death almost in the very first clash with

the specially trained punitive commands for many partisan detachments and entire formations."

Here is what is written about the actions of the Soviet partisans by those who fought against them: "Large detachments possessing heavy infantry weapons and even individual tanks...conducted combat operations, relying on their own bases which were concealed in impassable forests and swamps where it was almost impossible to seek them out.... The combating of the partisans was an extremely difficult undertaking, as their detachments, relying upon a good knowledge of the terrain and the support given them by a large portion of the local population, quickly gained information about the actions being readied against them and, as a rule, avoided the attacks.... However, even these measures did not make it possible for the Germans in any noticeable way to restrict the scale of partisan activities. At times entire rayons where the partisans had their own airfields recruited inductees and even collected taxes, remained inaccessible not only for individuals but even for German subunits and units engaged in combating the partisans" (p 236). And about the underground members: "In addition to the above-described detachments...there also existed so-called 'domestic partisans.' These were, as a rule, Bolshevistically-inclined local residents who calmly went about their ordinary jobs and at the same time, so to speak, "as a second profession" provided the partisans with various information. When a suitable instance arose, these 'domestic partisans' themselves took up arms and explosive and stealthily blew up bridges, and murdered German soldiers and officers as well as local inhabitants collaborating with the Germans" (p 236).

Without accusing the review's author of plagiarism, I should point out that the procedures employed by him are not original. All of this has existed before: the superiority of the German troops who suffered a defeat as a consequence of our great numerical superiority, the cruelty of the Russian commanders who drove thousands of servicemen to slaughter and the vain sacrifices of the partisan war. All of this was repeatedly used by Goebbels propaganda and was found in the Western press during the period of the Cold War. I recall leaflets dropped in 1943 by German aircraft over our positions (4th Ukrainian Front) with a picture of Stalin turning the handle of a meat grinder into which columns of Soviet troops were disappearing and coffins pouring out of it.

On 13 July 1988, LG published a letter from the reader A.I. Belov entitled "Was It Really a 'Success'?" And again emotions, conjectures and concoctions over the questions of the history of the Great Patriotic War are submitted as irrefutable facts. It is asserted: "...At the start of the Patriotic War, over 4 million Soviet servicemen were taken prisoner...." How can there be more of our servicemen who were captured than were in the entire Red Army by the start of the war? As is known, the Germans love precision and know how to count, all the more as the generals of the former Wehrmacht are not interested in understating our losses, more accurately the

reverse. According to their data, over the period from 22 June through September 1941, the Soviet troops lost around 2 million men in just prisoners...." (pp 5-6). The article then goes on to state that "approximately 60 million Soviet people were under bloody German occupation...." Here the former occupiers state: "The offensive by the German troops in the East had reached its apogee. Now a territory with a population exceeding 48 million persons was under German control" (p 192).

There are many questions requiring a careful elucidation in the history of the Great Patriotic War and particularly those concerning its initial period and the causes of our defeats and errors. But this must be done conscientiously and professionally, on the basis of studying the document-confirmed facts and the evidence of eye-witnesses. Here there must be no demagogic juggling of facts, half-truths and fabrication, dubious hypotheses and the ungrounded declaring all publications of previous years in which the actions of our troops are positively assessed to be a lie and falsification. We are perplexed and condemn the attempts by certain writers and journalists swept up in a passion of "revealing all" to besmirch the pearls of our heroic history. We cannot expect valorous deeds from our offspring if by the efforts of those living now they are left without a past for which they can be proud.

Footnotes

1. Translation from the German Edition: "Welkrieg 1939-1945," Stuttgart, 1957. The work was compiled with the participation of the following: Lt Gen Ditmar, Maj Gen von Butlar, Col Gen von Rendulitsch, Field Mar von Rundstedt, Lt Gen Zimmerman, Maj Gen von Roden, Cav Gen Westphal, Flt Adm Marshall, Cols Egelhaf and Selmayer and Lt Col Greffrath.

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Articles Not Translated from VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHURNAL No 10, October 1988

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Publication Data

00010003n Moscow VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY
ZHURNAL in Russian No 10, Oct 88 (signed to press
23 Sep 88

English title: MILITARY HISTORY JOURNAL

Russian title: VOYENNO-ISTORICHESKIY ZHUR-
NAL

Editor-in-Chief: V.I. Filatov

Publishing house: Krasnaya Zvezda

Place of publication: Moscow

Date of publication: October 1988

Signed to press: 23 September 1988

Copies:

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